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**Triple Alliance in Reverse**

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**Triple Alliance in Reverse**

**by**

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## **Dedication**

To David and Pilar.



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## **Abstract**

### **Triple Alliance in Reverse**

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Modern architecture in Latin America is not uncharted territory; it is still to be explored in depth. Within this framework I trace the development of modern architecture in Paraguay through the relationship with its regional neighbors—Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. These sometimes-contentious regional relationships not only fueled a war—the War of the Triple Alliance, which confronted Paraguay with the Triple Alliance of the neighboring countries Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. These same relationships produced the first examples of modern architecture in Paraguay. The four nations that are historically connected from pre-Columbian times find in the examples of modern architecture developed in Paraguay in the 1950s an expression of this connectivity, reflecting its tensions and the exchange produced within its margins.

Through the three parts of this thesis I work to decode the socio-economic framework that permeates the built environment. First, by addressing the region and its contentious relationships I look to bridge the conflict to modern architecture. Second, in approaching the subject I define the conditions of Asunción, the capital city, where the majority of the examples of modern architecture in the country are located. Third,

through the analysis of three case studies I decode the influence of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay in the development of modern architecture in Paraguay. This “Triple Alliance in Reverse” offers an opportunity to explore a view of modern architecture in Latin America as an alternative to the traditional north-south dynamic of architectural conversation to a south-south exchange, holding modern architecture in Paraguay as an example of these exchanges.

I have worked with the guidance of the scholarship of contemporary studies of architecture in Latin America with a critical view of the development of modern architecture across the developing world. Given the lack of bibliography and formal documentation regarding modern architecture in Paraguay, I have relied on interviews, photography, contemporary publications, and comparison with the development of modern architecture in the three countries that contributed to the development of modern architecture in Paraguay, combined with direct documentation of the buildings, to draw a profile of the development of modern architecture in Paraguay. As a result, Triple Alliance in Reverse decodes the contribution of the former Triple Alliance members to the development of modern architecture in Paraguay in the 1950s and projects it into the present and future condition of architecture in Paraguay and the region.

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## **Introduction**

### **Problem, Hypothesis, Objectives, and Sources**

The main purpose of this thesis is to uncover the history of modern architecture in Paraguay, for which little information is available; this study intends to treat an undocumented part of the history of architecture in Paraguay as a tool for future architectural studies about that country's architecture.

This thesis explores the socioeconomic conditions that influenced the development of modern architecture in Paraguay, relating an important event in Paraguayan history, the War of the Triple Alliance (1865-1870), as the force that truncated the incipient industrializing process that later influenced the development of modern architecture in the country. Furthermore, it explores how the same nations involved in the War of the Triple Alliance shaped modern architecture in the country from the 1950s to the present.

By analyzing examples of modern architecture in Paraguay built in the 1950s and early 1960s, this thesis aims to determine which were the main forces that influenced the beginning of the development of modern architecture in the country. I will pay special attention to the ten-year period around the opening of the first architecture school in Paraguay, in 1957, in order to determine those first moments of the arrival of modern architecture in which we can identify three specific influences from Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil. The connection to the opening of the architecture school is also a connection to future research on the development of architecture in Paraguay.

The study of modern architecture in Paraguay is still a work in progress as there is essentially no archived material and the buildings are in their majority still not protected. For the purpose of this thesis I have found help in the work of a group of architects,

professors, and scholars that has started researching and collecting material from this period. The most recent and important studies on modern architecture in Paraguay include the work of architect and critic Javier Rodriguez Alcalá, who has stressed the socioeconomic conditions surrounding modern architecture in several articles and with whom I have worked, along with Rossana Delpino, in the writing and editing of the book *Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil obra de Affonso Eduardo Reidy*. The book was part of our attempt to leave a document for the future study of modern architecture in Paraguay. Also as a departure for the historical connection I have relied in the piece *Super Rural* which I authored in the O'Neil Ford Duograph Series *Volume 5: Paraguay, Abu and Font House, Surubi House* edited by Barbara Hoidn which lends a framework to situate modern and contemporary architecture in Paraguay. Within the framework of the Architect and professor Carlos Sosa Rabito has been researching the work by Brazilian architect Fernando Saturnino de Britto; Sosa's findings are one of the few recollections of modern architecture in private dwellings in Paraguay.

Other sources of information and documentation available on modern architecture in Paraguay are mostly based on particular case studies generally of preservation and formal approach developed at the School of Architecture at the National University of Asunción. As related to the history of architecture and urban development in Paraguay, the work of architects Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase provided for a critical approach to the urban development of Asunción. And finally, as part of a group of architects interested in documenting modern architecture in Paraguay, I have been collaborating with Julio Diarte in the project of collection and documentation of modern architecture in Paraguay that lately has taken form in a web platform named *Plataforma de Arquitectura Moderna en el Paraguay*, which, while in its insipient moments, has



nevertheless collected much-needed information. Therefore, there is so far no identifiable body of work or bibliography that indicates a particular approach or school of thought regarding the study of modern architecture in Paraguay to which I am ascribing or confronting. Finally, this thesis aims to provide information that can become a tool for future critical analysis of modern architecture in Paraguay and the subsequent production of architecture in the country.

### **Justification, Significance, and Methodology**

I have approached the study of modern architecture in Paraguay with a connection to its neighbors Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay without denying that modern architecture was a global phenomenon. Through the exploration of the development of modern architecture in the region, this thesis aims to find the ways in which modern architectural ideas traveled in a South-South exchange as an alternative to a North-South dynamic. I explore the particular case of Paraguay as the visible receptor of these exchanges that also involve a tight relationship with the socioeconomic conditions of the country and the region with roots in nineteenth-century nation-making. The geopolitical dynamic that historically connected the region also created conflicts that will eventually take the four countries into a devastating war — devastating particularly for Paraguay — that would later impact the development of modern architecture.

In this thesis I track modern architecture in Paraguay as a result and illustration of the pre-Columbian regional definitions, the struggles of nation-making, the trauma of war, and the interchangeability of ideas within the region. As nation-making marked the development of modern architecture in the region, Paraguay is but one example of this dynamic and an example of modern architecture produced on the periphery of the

periphery. Memory, trauma, and reinvention mark a belated modern architecture that presents characteristics of modern architecture in the region.

### **Theoretical Frame**

Modern architecture in Latin America has been studied and, most important, taught in architecture schools as a side product of modern architecture or “sideline in the major history of modern architecture.”<sup>1</sup> With this thesis I aim to add to the present discussion in the study of modern architecture in Latin America as a construction within a particular context and not as an attribute in itself. In other words, I aim to study modern architecture in Latin America critically, not as a rarity but as part of the development of modern architecture as a whole within the discipline.

At the backbone of this thesis are the teachings and work of professor Fernando Lara in the lines of a critical understanding of twentieth century architectural history and theory. His classes as well as his work in one of the first recollections of modern architecture in Latin America in the book *Modern architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology, and Utopia* has served as a guide towards unraveling the work that I had started mostly intuitively studying modern architecture in Paraguay.

The study of modern architecture in this thesis takes a cultural approach where socio-economic conditions are evaluated side by side with formal elements to offer a Rosetta Stone on cultural conditions of architecture in Paraguay and the region. Essential for understanding the development of modern architecture in the 1950s in Latin America is to understand the ulterior motives that moved the economy of the states that had taken the image of modern architecture as synonymous of state. In this context, Brasília becomes the flagship of modern architecture associated with the image of state, and Paraguay would also follow this correlation of state and modern architecture by building

its new state infrastructure with a modern architecture language. The book *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* by Arturo Escobar offers the basis for a critical approach of development and therefore for decoding the use of modern architecture in Latin America as a tool of the state.

Felipe Hernandez in *Bhabha for Architects* offers the foundations for critically reading modern architecture in the context of a “space” that entails analytically filtering the interpretations of modern architecture in Latin America as a Eurocentric narrative. The process of nation building within the region comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay has gone through a contested process from the redefinition of the borders pre- and post-colonial years to the abovementioned war that engulfed the four countries and ended the redefinition of such borders. Understanding the process of building the nation as a homogenizing process renders modern architecture as the ultimate parallel expression of flattening the ground and from a *tabula rasa* building up new structures that would become the image of the new nation.

The work of architectural historian Ramon Gutierrez concentrating on the development of architecture outside of the traditional centers of the region such as Buenos Aires, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, or Montevideo provides a road map for understanding modern architecture developed regionally outside of the traditional centers of power. Gutierrez’s study of the off-center architectural history in the region—such as the case of Corrientes, Argentina or Asunción, Paraguay—opens up the path for studying the continuity of the development of an architecture that was elaborating on cultural realities within the region.

As the proposed regional study of modern architecture centers on examples located outside the traditional development centers in the region, it highlights the need for

understanding the root and persistence of regional definitions through history. Martha Elena Parés's *Huellas KA-TA-GUA* provides a background to understanding the pre-Colombian population of the region as well as a connection with the location of natural resources. And the nation-making process builds in part on this connectivity and the conflicts to regain control of natural resources. *El Cono Sur Una Historia Común* presents a clear subdivision of the Southern Cone from a geographic point of view, and *Building Nineteenth-Century Latin America: Re-Rooted Cultures, Identities, and Nations* dwells on culture and identity when the new nations and state institutions were being shaped across Latin America after their independence. The correlation of pre-Columbian cosmovision, regional understanding through natural resources, and the process of formation and consolidation of nation creation in the region comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay will provide a support to establishing the connectivity and exchanges that occurred through the development of modern architecture in the region in the 1950s.

In *Latin American Modern Architectures: Ambiguous Territories*, a collection of essays, I will follow the particular characteristics of modern architecture in the region and how these characteristics changed and traveled within Latin America. By focusing and understanding the regional characteristics within modern architecture, I will look into finding patterns of connectivity expressed in architectural form.

The interaction entailing the clash of cultures in the colonization and nation-making processes is key to understanding the development of modern architecture in the region. The development of modern architecture in Paraguay presents the perfect case study of this clash as modern architecture arrives to Paraguay in mid twentieth century through the same three conduits that the genocidal War of the Triple Alliance did in

1870. The case study of modern architecture in Paraguay presents a setting in which genocide and trauma studies can contribute to an explanation of the underlying forces that produce modern architecture. The *Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* offers a definition of the condition and effects of genocide within the construction of national identities, which offers a path to explaining possible traces of the effects of genocide in modern architecture in Paraguay.

Trauma as the effect of genocide and war offers a profile that can correlate to the creation of the new monumentality of modern architecture in Paraguay and the region, as modern architecture and state are intimately related. The work of Judith Lewis Herman in *Trauma and Recovery* serves as a tool for understanding the coping mechanisms that a society uses and thereby the cultural expressions that they can offer. The will to forget and the need for silence are elements identifiable in traumatic situations, and this will and need can be traced to the production of a monumentality that could be an attempt to erase memories of defeat. In the same study of trauma within architecture I will place the study of the architectural gifts offered to Paraguay by Argentina and Brazil, two of the members of the Triple Alliance against Paraguay, only eighty years after the end of the war.

The main source for organizing the thesis will be the analysis of architectural projects based on the work of Linda Groat's *Architectural Research Methods*, which considers the analysis of the architectural projects at its center. A cultural studies approach will substantiate the background of the changes and relationships of architecture through the different stages of the regional and nation-definition processes and the modernization process in Latin America.

## **Structure**

I have organized the thesis in three main parts: the first part covers a historic background of the country and its architecture; the second part is an overall profile of the city of Asunción and the location of the three case studies; the third part presents three case studies connected to the Triple Alliance members — Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. These chapters operate under the overall idea that modern architecture in Paraguay is indeed a “Triple Alliance in Reverse.”

In Part One I endeavor to establishing the relationship between the War of the Triple Alliance and the development of modern architecture in Paraguay through a description of Paraguay within the region, the nation’s origins, and the regional relationships through history, including the conflict that confronted the Triple Alliance of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay against Paraguay and that gives name to this thesis. The relationships among the nations in this chapter are central to understanding that the War of the Triple Alliance is not an isolated regional clash but instead a process that has roots in precolonial regional definition and tensions that escalated due to the modern nation-making process in the region. Ultimately this first part looks to establish the relationships within the region and in particular among the nations of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay that in the 1950s would materialize in the development of modern architecture in Paraguay.

Part Two is about Asunción, the capital city of Paraguay and the main location of modern architecture in Paraguay. By describing Asunción and its geographic characteristics through a brief history of the city’s settlement as well as its urban evolution, I aim to connect the broader regional context to focus on the immediate

context of the insertion in the city of the case studies analyzed in the final part of the thesis.

Part Three of the thesis contains the three case studies that support the main claim of this thesis connecting the War of the Triple Alliance and modern architecture in Paraguay. This third part taps as well into the connection of state and modern architecture in a state that, like its regional neighbors, had invested itself in a *developmentalist* agenda and linked its institutional image to modern architecture. The buildings of the Asociación Nacional Republicana (ANR) – Partido Colorado Headquarters, the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, and the Hotel Guaraní as I present them in this third part represent respectively the Uruguayan, the Argentinean, and the Brazilian influence in the development of modern architecture in Paraguay. Through an analysis of each case study, from the location to the formal elements of each building, this chapter connects the buildings with their influences as well as the degrees to which each project searches for and achieves — or not — the connection with the state's image.

Throughout the thesis I will offer evidence demonstrating the connection between the War of the Triple Alliance and the development of modern architecture in Paraguay. As the thesis develops, I will look to answer fundamental questions: Is the development of modern architecture in Paraguay actually a Triple Alliance in reverse? And is the development of modern architecture in Paraguay an attempt to offer a retribution by the members of the Triple Alliance? Or, do the tensions that were part of the nation creation in the region continue to inform the relationship among these regional neighbors? And finally, with this thesis I aim to address the future development of architecture in Paraguay based on past and present-day connectivity in the region.

## **Chapter One: *Stitching***

### **ESTABLISHING A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN PARAGUAY**

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this thesis is to develop the ideas that surrounded the establishment of modern architecture in Paraguay as directly linked to the War of the Triple Alliance, a war that Paraguay sustained against its regional neighbors Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay—the same countries that later became the three main influences on modern architecture in Paraguay. The War of the Triple Alliance, as we will see in this introductory chapter, hindered Paraguay’s insipient industrialization and delayed the arrival of modern architecture to the country, thereby affecting the ways in which modern architecture arrived to the country. Modern architecture arrived to Paraguay through the three same conduits as the war did; in other words, modern architecture arrived to the country through either buildings or architectural ideas coming from Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay.

This introductory section aims to present the geographical conditions and historical facts that define Paraguay as a nation. It also aims to portray the entrenched as well as contested regional relationships that Paraguay sustained through its creation as a nation with Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay from colonial times until the arrival of modern architecture to the country in the 1940s. In other words, this section makes the connection between nation-making and modern architecture in Paraguay through the war that debilitated in the country at a fundamental moment in its history.

There are other questions that rise from the study of the Triple Alliance and its effects on modern architecture, and these questions are related to Latin America as a region, its existence before the “discovery” by the Europeans, and the development of its



own particular culture. If the war had never happened, would Paraguay have continued on its path towards modern architecture with different architectonic outcomes? Were there any ulterior motives for the countries of the triple alliance to enter into a war with Paraguay and devastate it into near oblivion? Was the particular making of Paraguay as an independent country with a majority mestizo population a threat to dominant European societies of the region? Can we consider the war against Paraguay a continuation of the genocide of natives in Latin America? In the study of these subjects that escape mere architectural history, but nevertheless mark the physical outcome of architecture as cultural objects, there are no uni-directional conclusions; rather, there are starting points for locating important markers of the development of regional and Paraguayan culture that have marked Paraguay's particular relationship with modern architecture and its outcomes.

To understand the historic relationship between Paraguay and the triple-alliance countries—Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay—I will focus first on Paraguay's origin as a nation - and post-war conditions of the country. Finally, I will endeavor to understand how and why it was not until the 1940s and 1950s that Paraguay started processes of modernization that included the arrival of modern architecture to the country. It is important to understand the post-war years of the country and its development, when modern architecture took hold of the region.

I have organized this introductory chapter chronologically, dividing it into three main sections: Paraguay's origins and its regional relationships; War of the Triple Alliance war, both the precursors to and the execution of the war; and the post-war years that led to the arrival of modern architecture to the country in the 1940s and 50s.

## PARAGUAY'S ORIGINS

Picture Robert de Niro as captain Rodrigo de Mendoza in the 1986 film *The Mission* climbing the Yguazu Falls, dragging a bag with his conqueror's armor in it.<sup>2</sup> Putting questions of the movie's historical accuracy aside, we can observe in that scene the three most important components that define both the conquest and the future of Paraguay as a nation: first and foremost, its natural resources; second, its native inhabitants; and third, the arrival of the Europeans. The combination of these elements marks the past and future of Paraguay as a nation and depicts the relevance of regional relationships for a landlocked country throughout the creation of its nationhood and along its path to modern architecture.

There are five important elements for understanding Paraguay's origins and the regional characteristics as a definer of the country through time:

- Natural resources: water, in particular, as rivers are definers and connectors of the region;
- Native culture: the native culture that inhabited the area before colonization;
- Colonization: the arrival of Europeans and their culture to the region;
- Church: in particular, the Jesuit nation of *Paraquaria* and its interest in adhering to and continuing the existing patterns of regional occupation by the natives;
- Independence: Paraguay's emergence as an independent country and the unique particularities its mestizo culture provided, as well as the inherent struggles of nation-making that Paraguay encountered.

## **LATITUDE 23 00 SOUTH LONGITUDE 58 00 WEST**

Landlocked Paraguay sits in the center of the Southern Cone of South America; the Tropic of Capricorn traverses the country, which renders its geography to the north tropical and to the south subtropical. (Figure 1.1) Why would geographic information be of interest in this portion of the thesis? In order to introduce the country to the reader and later explain the regional links to modern architecture, it is important that the reader understand environmental characteristics and pattern of intermittent connection-disconnection that has occurred through the history of the region and how these factors affected the arrival and timing of modern architecture to the country.

Geographic characteristics as well as the regional relationships among Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay are fundamental to understanding Paraguay, its people, and its architecture through history and, in particular, the context of the development of modern architecture in Paraguay. The relationships among the four countries cited above are the premise of this thesis regarding the dissemination of modern architecture in the region in general and, in particular, the onset of modern architecture in Paraguay.

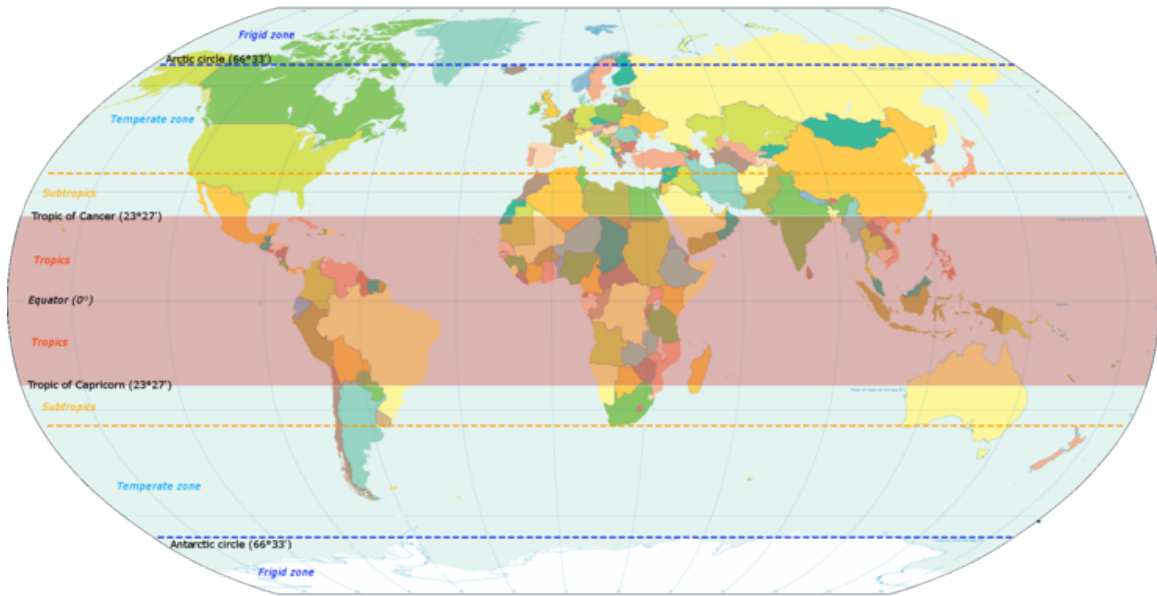


Figure 1.1 Shared natural conditions among Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay  
Source: “World\_map\_indicating\_tropics\_and\_subtropics.png (PNG Image, 2000 × 1117 Pixels) - Scaled (36%),” accessed November 11, 2016, [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b0/World\\_map\\_indicating\\_tropics\\_and\\_subtropics.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b0/World_map_indicating_tropics_and_subtropics.png).

The geographical connections within this region are governed mostly by the power of water. Paraguay is divided geographically by the Paraguay River (Rio Paraguay) into the western region (Paraguay Occidental, or the Chaco) and the eastern region (Paraguay Oriental). The rivers that define its borders—the Rio Paraguay and the Rio Paraná—are also the ones that connect Paraguay with its neighbors Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. A testimony to the regional relationship among Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay is the Guaraní Aquifer, one of the largest aquifer systems in the world, that lies beneath these countries. Accordingly, natural resources coincide with the region’s political and social relationships.

Water connects and divides Paraguay. This division is evident when we compare the territory east and west of the Paraguay River. In the eastern, more-populated region of Paraguay we find the green hue that engulfs nearly everything in it, contrasting strikingly with the flatness and aridness of the western region of the inhospitable Chaco. As it dissects the country, the Paraguay River also connects with the Paraná River and the hydrological system of the Cuenca del Plata that includes Brazil (South), Argentina (North), and Uruguay (Figures. 1.2, 1.3).<sup>3</sup>



Figure 1.2: Paraguay map with rivers and principal cities. Source: [http://www.mapsofworld.com/lat\\_long/paraguay-lat-long.html](http://www.mapsofworld.com/lat_long/paraguay-lat-long.html)



Figure 1.3: Guaraní Aquifer Under Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay Source: “15952551871\_e646e0a0fd\_o.jpg (JPEG Image, 1453 × 1442 Pixels) - Scaled (28%),” accessed January 29, 2016, [https://farm9.staticflickr.com/8658/15952551871\\_e646e0a0fd\\_o.jpg](https://farm9.staticflickr.com/8658/15952551871_e646e0a0fd_o.jpg).

At a regional level, Paraguay is inscribed inside the Southern Cone region. The southern half of South America, the Southern Cone, comprises Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. For the purpose of this thesis, I will emphasize the understanding of the relationship between Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay through time. Edmundo Heredia in *Existe el Cono Sur?* in *El cono sur una historia común* presents a clear subdivision of the Southern Cone from a geographic point of view. Heredia explains how the region can be understood as a unitary space with four subdivisions according to strong natural phenomena: “1. *La region y cuenca platenses*, 2. *El paso interoceánico austral*. 3. *La region y cuenca amazónica* y 4. *La Cordillera de los*

*Andes.*” Paraguay forms part of the first subdivision within the *Cuenca Platense* region along with Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. As the name explains, the region is defined by the *Cuenca del Plata*. Considering its landlocked condition and powerful neighbors such as Argentina and Brazil, not only the geography but the culture and, more important for this thesis, the dissemination of ideas is greatly tied to these regional relationships.<sup>4</sup>

(Figure 1.4)

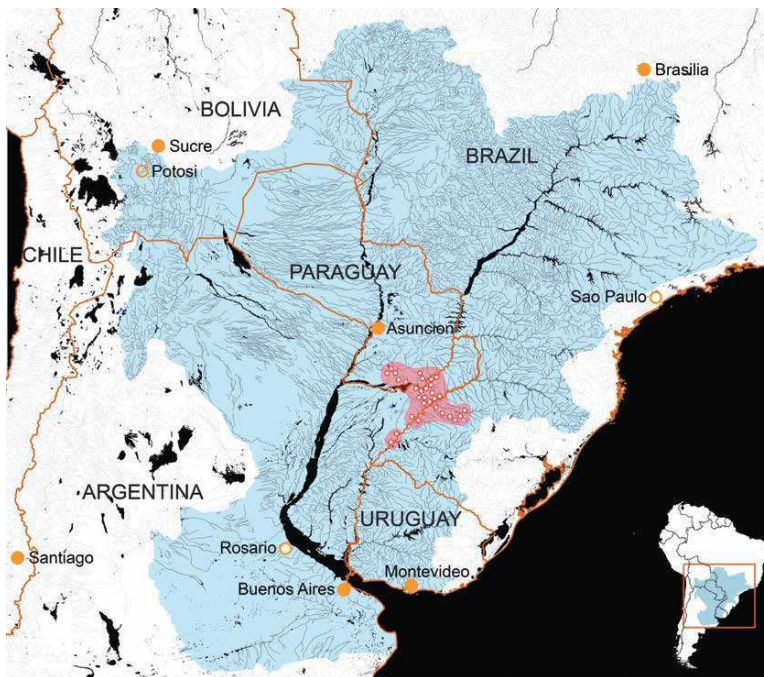


Figure 1.4: Cuenca del Plata and Jesuit Settlements mostly following previous native settlements Source: “Territory Guarani (Spring 2015),” accessed November 28, 2016, <http://revista.drclas.harvard.edu/book/export/html/575786>.

The aquifer and the Cuenca del Plata system illustrate Paraguay’s dual condition of isolation and connectivity with its neighbors. As is evident in the images, Paraguay’s landlocked condition makes it dependent on relationships with its neighbors to reach the open ocean for commerce and other needs. The aquifer is the recharge zone of the Rio de

la Plata region and produces Paraguay's hydric conformation with the rivers that define the country's eastern region, the most fertile and populated area, as well as the communication with the other Rio de la Plata neighbors. To the west lies the Paraguayan Chaco, an inhospitable, sparsely populated desert that separates the rest of the country from neighboring Bolivia to the northwest and Argentina, the Andes, and the Pacific Ocean to the west.

Water has been crucial to connectivity as well as conflict through Paraguayan history. Water brings different cultures to settle and occasionally collide; water is a contested limit and a coveted resource that for Paraguay became the path to development through its hydroelectric potential in the second half of the twentieth century. An island within the continent—an island surrounded by land—Paraguay has a uniquely complex history and has developed its own synergy through admixtures and confrontations, a synergy that reveals itself in Paraguay's modern architecture.

### **From Guaraní to Paraguay**

La mayoría de sus hombres han desaparecido, pero los caminos del agua guardan celosamente los secretos de aquella ancestral cultura que, curiosamente, se mantiene con la fuerza y el ímpetu de las corrientes. Carmen Helena Parés, 1995<sup>5</sup>

The culture and evolution of what would become Paraguay has its roots in the original people that populated the region—specifically, the Guaraní. The Guaraní also arrived to the area following the watercourses and established themselves in the areas surrounding the Paraguay and Paraná rivers. In fact, according to Carmen Helena Parés, in the KA-TA-GUA region there is a common ancestry for the *Karive*, *Tupi*, and *Guaraní* natives of the region that communicated and moved through rivers and other water causeways from the Caribe to what is present-day Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and



Argentina. This common culture has characteristics that define the notion of freedom-mobility and therefore territorial division as well as a central power.<sup>6</sup>

The Guaraní Aquifer and the Cuenca del Plata define the region where we find present-day Paraguay, a recognizable region within which exchange and settlements have existed since before the Spaniards and Portuguese arrived to South America. When the Spaniards founded the Casa Fuerte de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, in 1537, they found the *Cario* natives who were part of the Guaraní nation living in the area. In Paraguayan territory there were other Guaraní partialities, including the *Paranaenses*, the *Itatines*, and the *Guayraes*. These big Guaraní families settled near the Paraguay, Tebicuary, Jejuí, and Paraná rivers and were also the ones that had a direct relationship with the newly arrived Spaniards.<sup>7</sup>

The Guaraní people settled in the Guaraní-Cuenca del Plata region—or what is present-day Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay—inhabiting the region and most likely attracted by the welcoming living conditions that the region offered. A plentitude of water, diverse fauna and flora, and the subtropical climate of the region assured an existence and allowed for the establishment of a semi-nomadic culture that lived under an agricultural and subsistence system. Since pre-Columbian times, the existence of an interconnected region in what would be a post-colonial four-country region was well established and cemented by the natural conditions of the region.<sup>8</sup>

As previously mentioned, water is an important definer of the region. The Guaraní extended their territory from 5° latitude north to 35° latitude south and from 35° to 75° longitude west, mostly around the sea and river coasts, as well as the valleys that communicated among these areas. In other words, the linguistic family of the Tupi-Guaraní not only occupied vast sections of South America, but comprised families that

could conform vast communities of alliances that would be used by the Spaniards to increase their wealth and power.<sup>9</sup>

Regional relationships regarding natural resources and common ancestry mark geographic connectivity as well as ancestral native settlements. There is another relevant relationship developed after the arrival of the Spaniards—namely, the relationship between the Guaraní and the Spaniards. This relationship would become the basis for the particular making of Paraguayan society, which emerged as an independent nation in 1811.

## **COLONIZATION: GUARANÍ, SPANIARDS, AND THE MAKING OF PARAGUAY**

There were two main guidelines for Spaniard colonization, one extractive and the other a community-oriented colonization whose goal was the domination of new territory through a policy of settlements. Lured by the accounts of an Empire of the White King and the Country of Gold, the Spaniards discovered Paraguay via a land route in 1524 and via waterways in 1528. In 1537 the Spaniards established the fort of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, the launching port for Spanish expeditions and the future capital city of the country. This dual purpose dwindled the population of Paraguay and made for one of the most important markers of Paraguay's culture in its extended mestizo culture.<sup>10</sup>

The quest for the empire of the White King soon came to a halt when in 1547 an expedition that departed from Asunción encountered a group of natives that confronted the expedition; in the words of Ulrich Schmidl, a member of the expedition, the natives “[r]ight away started talking to us in Spanish: we stayed cold right where we were.” In other words, the expedition had arrived at the Empire of the Incas, at the time already conquered by Spaniards (1532). From that moment forward, Paraguay was no longer considered the path to the promised riches and treasures; instead, efforts concentrated on settlement policies.<sup>11</sup>

Another example of the changes in Paraguay's Spanish population, an event related to the settlement policies in Paraguay, is the case of the re-foundation of Buenos Aires, in 1580. The original settlers of Buenos Aires could not hold the town, and by 1541 the Spaniards had vacated Buenos Aires. (Figure 1.6) The settlement was re-founded in 1580 by an expedition that departed from Asunción to establish for the second time what is present-day Buenos Aires. The connection between the established settlement of Asunción and the foundation of Buenos Aires, which in time would become

one of the most powerful settlements in the region, provides another example of the flows within the region which have remained a constant through history.



Figure 1.6: Engraving “Buenos Aeres” from *Vera Historia*, 1599, by Ulrich Schmidl  
Source: Harvard University, Houghton Library. “Image Delivery Service,”  
accessed February 3, 2016,  
<http://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/44067994?buttons=y>.

Upon the time of the arrival of the Spaniards to the present-day nation of Paraguay, the Guaraní natives were well established in the area and the Guaraní who inhabited the regions surrounding big rivers developed an alliance with the Spaniards. That alliance would give birth to the future Paraguayan society, the merger of two cultures—the Guaraní and the Spanish.

Paraguayans, from the country’s inception as part of a colonial territory and later as an independent modern nation, has been marked by a singular relationship with their homeland, which is reflected in their bilingual society. As I have discussed in the essay *Super Rural in Paraguay: Abu & Font House*, Paraguay’s bilingualism is the expression of a Paraguay’s cultural heritage as well as on of the predominant markers of its culture.

Paraguay's official bilingualism—comprising Spanish, the language of the conquering Europeans, and Guaraní, the language of the predominant group of indigenous peoples of this region prior to the arrival of Europeans—illustrates Paraguay's core cultural mixture and its cultural singularity compared to the immediate neighboring colonial provinces. In “early colonial Paraguay the “mestizos” or “mancebos de la tierra”, the offspring and subsequent descendants of Spanish conquistadores and the daughters of the natives, reached a social status participating officially in the civic life of the colony and becoming the majority of Paraguay's population.”<sup>12</sup>

A Spanish and Guaraní society was cemented in familial and social ties through which the newly arrived Spaniards became the de facto sons and brothers-in-law of the natives. This particular social structure and the Guaraní family-bound land distribution system contributed to a comparatively less violent post-conquest division of land than that in other regions of South America. Nonetheless, ties between Guaraníes and conquerors were not without conflict and as the natives contested the fairness of the evolution of this relationship, eventually they were displaced in favor of the conquistadores.<sup>13</sup>

Whether or not the Spanish-Guaraní cooperation was as harmonic as certain “Paraguayan nationalist writers maintain,” as Thomas Whigham states, the fact is that the mixture Guaraní-Spanish added to the dwindling Spanish population prompted the beginnings of a mestizo culture that reached a social status that it had not in the other colonies of the region.<sup>14</sup>

## **JESUITS**

Frühere Jesuitenmissions-Provinz Paracuaria  
La Antigua Provincia Jesuítica  
Former Jesuit Province of Paracuaria



Figure 1.7: Map of the Jesuit Province of Paracuaria comprising Argentinean, Paraguayan, and Brazilian Territory. (“Portal Guarani - Arte Franciscano Y Jesuítico - Paracuaria - Tesoros Artísticos de la República Jesuítica del Paraguay,” *Portal Guarani*, accessed January 30, 2016, [http://www.portalguarani.com/21\\_arte\\_franciscano\\_y\\_jesuítico/18617\\_paracuaria\\_\\_tesoros\\_artísticos\\_de\\_la\\_república\\_jesuítica\\_del\\_paraguay.html](http://www.portalguarani.com/21_arte_franciscano_y_jesuítico/18617_paracuaria__tesoros_artísticos_de_la_república_jesuítica_del_paraguay.html)).

Before ending the Paraguay Origins section of this introductory chapter, we must not forget another very important example of regional interconnection in what the Jesuit missionaries called the province of *Paracuaria*. The Jesuits established themselves in the region 100 years after the first arrival of the Spaniards to America through a system of thirty missions located in the region, occupying territories that in the present day correspond to Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. (Figure 1.7) These missions

became a nation in itself, functioning as an independent economic power that brought in 1767 their expulsion due to the confrontation with the other colonial powers. The Janus-faced connection-disconnection dynamic in pre-colonial and colonial Paraguay is evident in the different settlements and dominations through the history of the region, as well as confirms the peculiarity of the region in its native and post-colonial inhabitants' relations.<sup>15</sup>



Figure 1.8: Map of South America in the early colonial period. (Peter Lambert and Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics, The Latin America Readers* [Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013]: 52).

## INDEPENDENCE

Paraguay became an independent country in 1811. In 1814 Paraguay inaugurated its first dictatorship under Jose Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia; by 1816, the congress had empowered the dictator with perpetuity. José Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia, Supremo Dictador de la Republica del Paraguay, based his government on four doctrines: independence, isolation, order, and *civilism*. Of these doctrines, the ones that are relevant to this thesis are “independence” and “isolation”. Regional geopolitical instability of the lower provinces—that is, the future country of Argentina—prompted Paraguay to close its borders, allowing Paraguay to strengthen its own identity and independence, marking a difference with Buenos Aires, the Littoral Provinces, and Portuguese Brazil.<sup>16</sup>

The fears of annexation Paraguay’s government had been founded in the fact that Paraguay had previously belonged to the Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata. The Viceroyalty was dissolved in 1810, but Buenos Aires, the capital of the Viceroyalty, considered Paraguay still an Argentinean province. Therefore, Paraguay confronted three important issues needing resolution in its insipient independence: the recognition of its independence, the delimitation of its frontiers, and the navigation of its common rivers. In fact, Brazil became an ally of Paraguay because a reunification of Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia under the same government might have meant the total control of the Rio de la Plata by such a unified state, a situation unacceptable for Brazil, which needed to traverse Paraguay and Uruguay to reach its own territory of Matto Grosso from its capital, Rio de Janeiro. Alliances and enmities in the region had a direct connection to the nation-making process of the early nineteenth century. These alliances and enmities would continue far into the twentieth century and contribute to the delay in Paraguay’s



modern development, particularly the unprecedented destruction wrought by the War of the Triple Alliance.<sup>17</sup>

#### **PARAGUAY, ITS ORIGINS, THE FUTURE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS, AND ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT**

Paraguay's pre-colonial, colonial, and independent periods are marked by the consolidation of a Paraguayan nationhood nested in a majority *mestizo* population. An increased isolation of the country in the making of its nationhood only highlighted its particularities as a mostly *mestizo* nation. This unique nation would be almost annihilated by the War of the Triple Alliance, a war that I seek to demonstrate in this thesis has also affected the development of modern architecture in Paraguay. This war that can be also defined as a genocide and be added to the accounts of genocide in native nations committed through the colonization of the Americas.

The first period of independence found this region of South America still fighting to define its own new identity. Within the framework of new independent nations and because of the particularities of Paraguayan history and the almost homogenous *mestizo* population, Paraguay was ahead of its time in the definition of its own nationhood and on a path that certainly would be interrupted by the War of the Triple Alliance.<sup>18</sup> The creation of nations within the region in the midst of the clash of two civilizations would not stop until the beginning of the twentieth century, the very moment when modern architecture was arriving to South America. Following this logic, then, it is not far-fetched to say that Paraguay's halted development delayed the arrival of one of the expressions of the creation of the new nations—namely, modern architecture.

## TRIPLE ALLIANCE WAR SET UP AND ACTION

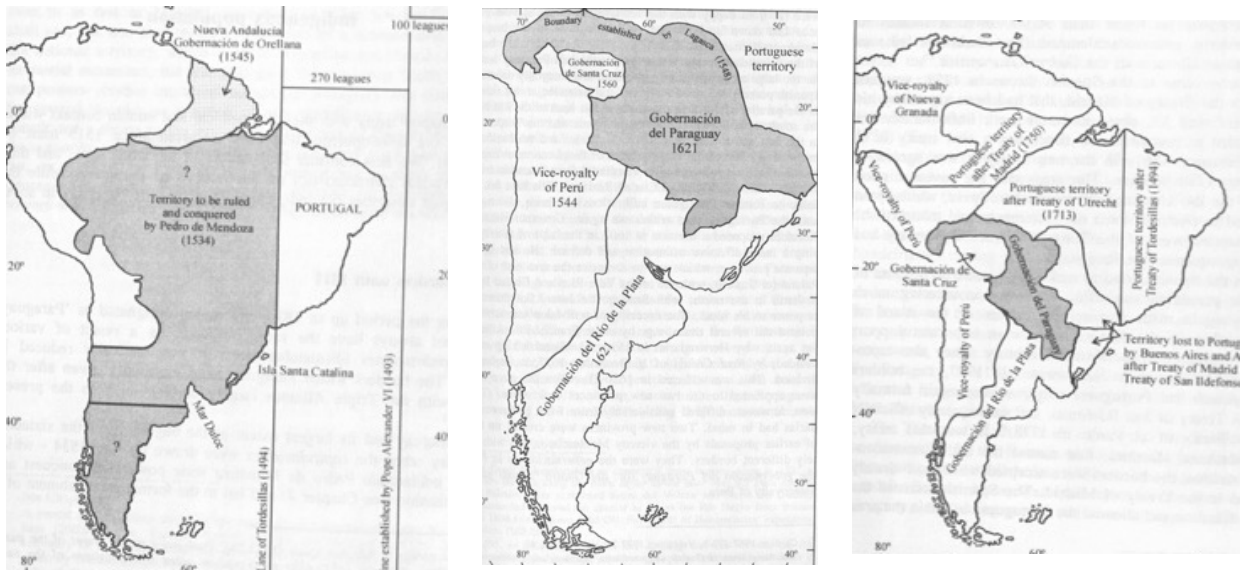


Figure 1.9: Evolution of territories in South America 1537-1713 Source: J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1515-1870: A Thematic Geography of Its Development*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, v. 92 (Madrid: Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana; Vervuert, 2003), 76, 69, 86.

In this section I will lay the connection to the main claim of this thesis, proving that in fact the War of the Triple Alliance 1865-1870 interrupted the process towards industrialization, hindering and delaying modern architecture's initiation. Paraguay's landlocked condition, regional connectivity, and shared history with its neighbors all play an important role in both the onset of the War of the Triple Alliance and the delayed arrival and development of modern architecture in Paraguay. This eighty-year leap becomes relevant because of the timely or perhaps untimely arrival of a war that took place during such a crucial time in the development of the nation that its effects prompted the nation's own redefinition.

In order to explain the immediate and long-term effects of the war, I will lay out the conditions of the country before the war, the reasons for the war, the ignition moment, and finally the effects that the war had on the country's population, territory, and socio-political conditions. This general introduction to the War of the Triple Alliance thereby lays the groundwork for the connection of war, architecture, and region.

This section is subdivided in four parts:

Pre-War:

Post-isolation: Condition of the country after first independent period.

Carlos Antonio Lopez, the first president (1844-1862)

Political-economic system

Building a country:

Openness of markets – construction of new infrastructure

Francisco Solano Lopez, the second president (1862-70)

International Affairs

Causes of the War / Theories:

Underlying tensions among the nations involved in the conflict accumulated over the years from the colonies to independent times

Ignition Moment:

Immediate actions that led to the conflict

Devastating Effects:

Pre-post war comparison of population, territory, and general fabric of the country

War reparations and connection to modern architecture

## **PRE-WAR**

### **Post – Isolation: Condition of the country after first independent period**

The same worries that had concerned the post-independence government of Dr. Jose Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia continued to occupy the Paraguayan government's agenda for years to come. Fundamental issues such as the recognition of its independence, the delimitation of frontiers, and the management of shared natural resources, such as and especially the region-connecting rivers, continued to populate Paraguayan and regional politics of the 1840s and eventually formed part of the cumulonimbus of causes that drove the region to conflict.

### **Carlos Antonio Lopez first president (1844-1862)**

Paraguay had established a national identity already in colonial times with a relatively homogenous population with shared traditions of community and its own language, Guaraní. During the government of Dr. Jose Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia this national cohesion cemented on the isolationist agenda of his government. This is the country that the next government would inherit. After Francia's death in 1840 and a brief transition period, Don Carlos Antonio López became the first president of the country, in 1844.<sup>19</sup>

### **Building a Country - Preparing infrastructure- Political, Economic system**

The core goals of López's government, based still in an authoritarian model, were to modernize the state and build on relationships that would connect the country to the international theater. The reorganization entailed the opening of the country to

international commerce and providing the country with infrastructure for future growth. On a different route to nation-making than Dr. Francia's isolationist approach, Carlos Antonio Lopez tapped into the existing national cohesion to take the next steps to nation recognition.

During Carlos Antonio Lopez's twenty-year rule his government invested in public and infrastructure works. Among these projects we can cite the construction of public roads, a foundry and an industrial smithy, a shipyard, a national theater, an arsenal, a legislative palace, several presidential residences and ministry buildings, various military facilities, and a railroad that was among the first in the Southern Cone. This government also invigorated education in order to keep up with its own modernization since education was in fact a department in which Francia's government had lagged by closing seminaries, the only places for higher education in the country.<sup>20</sup> In other words the modernizing agenda ruled most of the government's efforts and its goals were preparing people and infrastructure for the matter.

As previously mentioned, modernization of the state was not the only agenda of the post-Francia government. Another important topic of Carlos Antonio López's agenda was the pursuit of international recognition of Paraguay. This pursuit is key to understanding the conflicts existent in the region as independent nations started developing in the early nineteenth century and a link to the possible causes of the war.<sup>21</sup>

Modernization through inclusion in the international markets was geared to ascription to the European definition of civilization. There was no particular consideration of the native's culture apart from the de facto mestizo population. In 1848 the state repossessed the lands of twenty Indian villages whose origins were connected to the Jesuit missions, and the activities and government of these villages were reorganized

within the states system, giving the inhabitants citizenship in the Paraguayan state and forcing them to adopt Spanish names. While the purpose of the government was to develop a new state cemented in its own particularities, these characteristics were not inclusive of the native population. The main purpose was to update the state so it could trade and function among the “civilized” countries. Although Lopez’s government did not in any case start this kind of connectivity, its system was just a continuation of or evolution beyond the colonial condition.<sup>22</sup>

After Carlos Solano López’s death, in 1862, Francisco Solano López succeeded his father in the presidency and followed his father’s interest in modernizing the country and its international recognition. In fact, Francisco Solano López had been a war minister during his father’s government and had traveled through Europe looking for diplomatic recognition and armaments. The government of Francisco Solano López was centered on militarization and national identity, a path that would eventually take the country to war only three years later. However, conflictive outcomes in the nation-making process were perhaps inevitable due to the position of Paraguay within the region.<sup>23</sup>

## **CAUSES FOR THE WAR OF TRIPLE ALLIANCE / THEORIES**

### **Underlying differences accumulated over the years from the colonies to independent times**

As previously mentioned, there were underlying conflicts related to the consolidation of nation-states in the region that might have led to the War of the Triple Alliance, and these causes date back to colonial times. These uncertainties had prompted the isolationist policies of Francia’s government and neither of the Lopez governments were an exception, as issues of recognition, independence, limits, and navigability of

rivers continued undermining the new nation's internal politics and international relationships. One vital question to answer in order to understand the nation-making process and its struggles is: How was Paraguay's independence as a nation received in the international theater of nations?

Paraguay declared its independence in 1811 and in 1842 ratified this independence in a more formal way through its Congress. Brazil did not recognize Paraguay's independence until 1844. Bolivia, Venezuela, and Austria followed Brazil in recognizing Paraguay's independence. Argentina's dictator, Juan Manuel de Rosas, *caudillo* and governor of the Buenos Aires Province, was still in power until 1852 and he regarded Paraguay, previously part of the Viceroyalty of the Rio de La Plata, as a rebellious Argentine province. Only after Rosas left power did Argentina recognize Paraguay's independence, in July 1852, and granted free navigation of the Rio Paraná, Rio Paraguay, and Rio de la Plata. However, Argentina's Congress did not formally acknowledge Paraguay's independence until 1856. Great Britain recognized it in 1853, because previously it had not wanted to upset its good relationships with Argentina. The same year, France, the United States, and Italy followed Great Britain in recognizing Paraguay's independence.<sup>24</sup> One of the main efforts of Lopez's government was to assert Paraguay's independence and relevance in the region and worldwide; however, Lopez's intentions would prove too entangled in the still tumultuous region's nation-making process, becoming, as already anticipated by Francia's government, a source of conflict.

The war had many causes, some particular to the period of the 1860s and others that dated back to the colonies and the period of independence. Isolation and independence were Paraguay's main post-independence goals, which collided with the regional instability resulting from the creation and consolidation of modern nations in

which Paraguay was also immersed. A region prone to conflicts over territorial limits, use of resources such as rivers, alliances-interventions, and power struggles was a stage on which a war inevitably developed.

### **Immediate causes that led to conflict**

Apart from the general theories about the war, there were immediate actions that led to the conflict and that also confirm the interconnection and conflictive condition of the new nations in the region. The immediate actions of war were prompted by the alliances that the Paraguayan government had in the region and the volatility of the internal relations of the region.

Hostilities began in 1864 after a sequence of events occurred. Again, these events were consequences of the nation-making processes of the region and the power struggles within and among the different countries in the region. The Paraguayan government, in the person of its president and General of the Paraguayan Army Francisco Lopez, issued an ultimatum to the Brazilian government regarding its intromission in Uruguayan internal politics, considering any occupation of Uruguay by Brazilian troops to be a cause for war. In 1864 Brazilian forces landed in Uruguayan territory; in response, the Paraguayan government seized a Brazilian merchant ship sailing the Rio Paraguay. The war had begun and the process of reshaping national territories within the region found an almost conclusive form after the conflict.<sup>25</sup>

### **Theories of the causes of the War**

The War of the Triple Alliance, 1865-70, was a war in which Paraguay confronted the allied forces of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. Such war was devastating to Paraguay, decimating its population and reducing its territory. The country as well as



the region's territorial delineation after the end of the war marks the moment at which the four countries established their borders conclusively.

Among the many theories into the causes of the War of the Triple Alliance, we can single out two main currents: The Imperialist, which establishes that the war was a result of the confrontation spurred by British Imperialism (the Alliance) as a way to subdue the bad example posed by Paraguay and its economy, which was not dependent on its neighbors; and a second theory that presents the war as a struggle between civilization (the Alliance) and barbarism (Paraguay). Paraguay itself developed a literature for and against the president and General of the Paraguayan Army, Francisco Solano López (posthumously made Marshal), some championing his heroism and others condemning him as an egomaniac. Political scientist Diego Abente suggests that reducing the intricate international interaction to only ideological or emotionally charged concerns would be to “undermine the complexities of international interactions”, and, as we will see, the process of nation building brought with it intense regional frictions.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, even though this thesis is an architectural history I will strive to expose the reasons for the war as clearly as possible because in them lies the key to the arrival and implementation of modern architecture in Paraguay and the region.

The causes of the conflict have been given complex titles such as “Genocidio Americano. La Guerra del Paraguay” (American Genocide. The Paraguayan War) by Brazilian author Julio José Chiavenato, or “La Guerra del Paraguay. ¡Gran Negocio! (The Paraguayan War. Big business!) by Argentinian author Leo Pomer, and “A Invasão Paraguaia no Brasil” (The Paraguayan invasion in Brazil) by Walter Spalding. These works, among others, illustrate the different approaches taken to analyze the conflict and its causes.

In this thesis the interest resides in the different theories as a reminder of the connectivity and complex relationships within the region. These relationships and the socio-political development of the countries show its complexities and connectivity in modern architecture on what would become the state architecture of Paraguay in the 1950s as well as the state architecture of the other Triple Alliance members from the first quarter of the twentieth century forward.

Major theories about the causes of the war are framed by the known issues regarding the modern nation-making process initiated after independence as well as the globalization process initiated with the arrival of conquerors to America. In fact, Diego Abente's paper on the causes of the War of the Triple Alliance analyses the conflict through war theories, arriving at plausible causes of the conflict and re-enforcing the importance of the nation-making process and development of nations and their assertion of power in the region and worldwide as true causes of war.<sup>27</sup>



Figure 1.10: Image from the triple Alliance Cabichui (The wasp) a newspaper published at army headquarters during the Triple Alliance War. In this cartoon, “the three leaders of the of the Triple Alliance are being burnt alive in a cooking pot with Emperor Pedro II holding a copy of the Secret Treaty.” Illustration by Saturio Rios. Cabichui, August 22, 1867 Source: Peter Lambert and R. Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, The Latin America Readers (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), 76.

Apart from the different theories, there is a document that sparks another set of questions regarding the involvement of Great Britain in the conflict. Figuring into the discussion is the now infamous secret Treaty of the Triple Alliance, which consists of a military treaty signed between the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay on May 1, 1865 formalizing a “Triple Alliance” against Paraguay.(Figure 1.10) The content

of the secret treaty came to light ten months later, on March 2, 1866, before the House of Commons. This is another reason for speculation about Britain's instrumental participation in the making of the alliance as part of its "plans for expansion of its 'informal empire' in South America". Among other considerations, the treaty states that the aim of the war was to remove president Francisco Solano Lopez from office. It also specifically set out Paraguayan reparations in accordance with the territorial pretensions of the allies. A controversial treaty, it showed that the war was "aimed at the dismemberment of Paraguay rather than simply the removal of Lopez." Does this involvement by sponsoring the meeting of the three powers and signing a treaty in the presence of a British official imply an endorsement of the war by the British? Furthermore, what was the interest of British participation in such an act? Should we consider the imperialist theory?<sup>28</sup>

The secrecy of the treaty had to do with the strategic intention of keeping it secret until objectives were achieved, but it is the fact that the treaty states that the war was against Lopez and not Paraguay and that territorial integrity would be respected after the war that sparks conspiracy theories. Loss of territory and life resulting from the war indicates perhaps that there was an ulterior motive to make Paraguay disappear as a state all together. There is also the relevance of this thesis examining how modern architecture was used by the Paraguayan state in the 1950s, roughly eighty years after the war ended, as the embodiment of the re-birth of Paraguay. The slow reorganization of the state after the war and the ascription to nationalist ideals are thus the background against which modern architecture arrives to Paraguay as tool to reestablish a state after a long period of recovery.

## Devastating Effects



Fig. 3.5. The borders of Paraguay in 1811, on the basis of *uti possidetis* (after Benítez 1996:63; White 1989:3).



Fig. 3.6. The territorial losses of Paraguay after the war with the Triple Alliance (after Benítez 1995:64; Nickson 1993:xx; Vasconcellos 1970:109).

Figure 1.11: Left borders of Paraguay in 1811 and right territorial losses of Paraguay after the war with the Triple Alliance. Source: J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1515-1870: A Thematic Geography of Its Development*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, v. 92 (Madrid: Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana; Vervuert, 2003), 95-96.

## Territorial and Population Losses

The War of the Triple Alliance devastated the country and the capabilities for its future development. It is mostly accepted that Paraguay lost close to fifty percent of its population during the war, with most of the male population devastated. The numbers relating to the population of Paraguay previous to the war vary between 400,000 to 700,000. Several studies have been published over the years regarding the real size of the population: for example, according to Paraguayan diplomat Juan Andres Gelly the

population of Paraguay in 1858 was 600,000 inhabitants, but other accounts estimate the population to have been between 400,000 and 700,000 inhabitants. The conflict lasted from 1864 to 1870, and by 1870 Paraguay had lost approximately fifty percent of its prewar population and its agriculture cattle ranching and industry were totally destroyed. To add to the human losses, most of the male population succumbed during the war.<sup>29</sup>

Paraguay lost in its dismemberment 62,325 km<sup>2</sup> to Brazil and of 94,090 km<sup>2</sup> to Argentina—a total of 156,415 km<sup>2</sup>. Paraguay lost twenty-five percent of its territory in the conflict, which meant a new reorganized geography, although none of the territories lost had been heavily populated, meaning no cities were expropriated by Brazil or Argentina, but the general destruction was in fact devastating to the wellbeing of the survivors of the war, eventually adding to the loss of human lives.<sup>30</sup>

This was not a lost war; it was general devastation. It was genocide. If in the nineteenth century most of the newly independent Latin American states annihilated various indigenous populations that inhabited their territories to impose their will on the territories, it stands to reason that the intention of the Alliance was in fact to get rid of one of the strongholds of indigenous and *mestizo* populations in the region—namely, Paraguay. *The Oxford Handbook of Genocidal Studies* considers it to be a fact that the War of the Triple Alliance was the destruction of a nation and the indigenous population of the region.<sup>31</sup>

### **War and Modern Architecture**

Considering the close relationship between industrialization and modern architecture, we can state that the War of the Triple Alliance thoroughly interrupted the development of the country and its foreseeable industrialization, resulting in slowed development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and belated arrival of

modern architecture to Paraguay by the mid twentieth century. Questions linger in regards to Paraguay's future as a nation under Francisco Solano Lopez's government. If not for the war, what type of government would have followed? Would the country have been able to stop conflicts with its neighbors? What were the possibilities or even intentions of Paraguay to stop or resist any attempt of the advances of the market-based systems founded in the models of dependency?

The nation-making process and disputes that engulfed the region in the 1860s were indeed the major cause for the eruption of the war and final devastation of Paraguay. Why didn't Brazil stop the war in 1866 when it had the opportunity? Why did Brazil not abandon the conflict since the Paraguayan forces did not directly threaten them? Was Brazil concerned that if it abandoned the conflict Argentina would have been able to add Paraguay to its territories and become a threat to Brazil's hegemony in the region? These and other questions are to be answered by scholars in the field of history, aided by a strong dose of critical thinking. As for this thesis, I have tried to acknowledge all the possible causes and effects that can elucidate the reality of Paraguay when modern architecture arrived to the country by mid twentieth century. The Paraguay that received modern architecture in the mid twentieth century was a country marked by the traumatic effects of war both in its economy and, most important, in its human capital.

### **War Occupation of the country**

For about six years after the end of the War of the Triple Alliance, Paraguay was occupied by Argentine and Brazilian forces. The independence of the country was spared perhaps as a manifestation of the rivalry between its most powerful neighbors, Argentina and Brazil, much as Uruguay had maintained its existence for the same reasons. After the war the native's tongue, Guaraní, was banned from education, and immigration that

facilitated a “whitening” of the population was encouraged by the occupying forces. Argentina and Brazil exerted their power and own interests in molding the country towards their own interests.<sup>32</sup>

### **War reparations**

Where does the relationship between the War of the Triple Alliance and modern architecture in Paraguay lie? We have established on one hand the devastation that the country sustained and the obvious effect on the country’s development. Historically modern architecture has been connected with the effects of industrial revolution as well as with the arrival of the modern state; in the case of Paraguay, these elements defined how and when modern architecture arrived to Paraguay.<sup>33</sup>

Now how is that a war that happened in 1870 is directly related to the development of modern architecture? One of the answers to this question has to do with war reparations. The secret treaty of 1865 signed in Buenos Aires by representatives of the governments of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, formalizing a “Triple Alliance” against Paraguay, establishes that the war was to be against Lopez and not the country and that the territorial integrity of the country should be maintained. Nevertheless, the territorial reparations left a country with a reorganized geography twenty-five percent smaller than it was before the war.<sup>34</sup> Only in 1942 did Argentina declare the Paraguayan debt for the conflict extinguished; in 1943 Brazil did the same. In the subsequent years both Brazil and Argentina undertook studies for using the Paraná River as a source of hydroelectric power and gifting Paraguay with modern architecture.<sup>35</sup> These chronologic coincidences are the ones that feed the main claim of the thesis that indeed modern architecture is a “Triple Alliance in Reverse.” Then again, perhaps it is not in reverse at all.



## **ESTABLISHING THE SECOND REPUBLIC 1870-1940**

In this section I depict the overall development of the country from the end of the war to the arrival of modern architecture in the 1940s. Considering the many changes that Paraguay underwent from 1870 to 1940, I will address the ones that connect the War of the Triple Alliance War to modern architecture.

As Paraguay reinvented itself, there are two important topics that relate directly to the thesis: the socio-economic development of the country, and the relationship with the Triple Alliance countries, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. The general conditions of the country and the relationship with the former allied forces provide a profile of the country at the arrival of modern architecture and clues to its further development.

What happened in Paraguay between devastation and the arrival of modern architecture? How did the country reinvent itself after the devastation of the war? How did the relationship between Paraguay and the Triple Alliance countries evolve post conflict? Did the relationships with the Triple Alliance countries have had any outcomes in architecture until this period? Did this seventy-year period encompass social changes connected to the use of modern architecture? Was modern architecture a social alternative to the existing architecture as a monumental approach? Many questions arise from this period because it represents the re-foundation of the country and, as we will see, modern architecture became the final symbol of the new republic.

### **Re – funding**

The eighty-year period after the end of the war raised for Paraguay as a nation fundamental issues such as reconstruction and reconciliation; in other words, the country had to “found” and “find” itself back and again. After the war, a period of occupation and transition between 1870 and 1876 became a period of reorganization. This period of

reorganization brought with it a delayed development of the country, compared to its regional neighbors and former war foes, and the competing influences of neighboring Argentina and Brazil on Paraguay's economy and internal politics. The *pendular* geopolitical relationships of Paraguay with neighboring countries Argentina and Brazil marked Paraguay's development, influences that would become evident in the modern architecture that arrived to the country in the 1940s and 1950s.

The War of the Triple Alliance and modern architecture in Paraguay are inextricably related and the three case studies analyzed in this thesis are examples of this relationship. The three projects—the Asociación Nacional Republicana, the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, and the Hotel Guaraní—are material testaments of the connectivity and interaction among the four countries. Almost as in an architectural project, this section is one of the last pieces that completes the image site analysis that received modern architecture in the 1940s.<sup>36</sup>

### **Defeat-Occupation-Devastation-Internal turmoil**

Immediately after the war, Paraguay had to deal with widespread destitution, economic collapse, foreign occupation, demands for reparations, and the decimation of male adult population. Argentinean and Brazilian forces occupied Paraguayan territory until 1876 and dominated the economy and internal politics of the country for years to come. Even in present day Paraguay there are still vestiges of the occupation that later became collaboration with both Argentina and Brazil hosting military “missions” and cultural centers in the capital of the country. The War of the Triple Alliance annihilated the first Paraguayan Republic, and the Second Paraguayan Republic organized slowly.

The second Paraguayan republic was unstable and prone to conflict. During a seventy-year period the country had thirty-two presidents, went through a war against its

western neighbor Bolivia (1934-36) over territorial disputes, and confronted a civil war (1947) with presidencies that lasted sometimes only forty-eight hours. In the span of a human lifetime the country experienced war, social unrest, and conflict that according to Nixon and Lambert were fueled by “poverty, inequality, and exploitation”. A dire outlook for the landlocked nation.<sup>38</sup>

The previously state-dominated economy turned to the private and international sector. During, the Second Republic of Paraguay and its future international relations were based on post-war land ownership. Paraguay went through a process of denationalization of its economy, selling vast state assets. This process provided for a post-war continuum of foreign powers dominating or at least mediating the internal politics and economy of the country. The very forces that the country had been fighting against during the period of independence and that had sparked the war itself had returned, influencing the very making of its nationhood, internal politics, and economy.<sup>39</sup>

The country was rebuilt on the basis of privatization and immigration. As examples of the changes in territorial and economic systems during this period, the state, which until 1870 owned 98 percent of the country’s land, had a policy of selling all state-owned lands and using twenty-five percent of the proceeds to promote immigration and create rural colonies; fifty percent was designated to protect internal industry, promote public instruction, and create a state navy. This “civilizing” program had no need to eliminate the natives and *mestizo* population, because the war had already effectively eliminated them. The state was dismantled, properties were sold to foreign investments and industries, and in the name of modernity traditional Paraguayan culture was discarded and replaced with new “civilized” canons. Progress and modernity were restricted to the governing elite, colonial interests, and merchants in Paraguay and foreign

investment centers. The productive portion of the population was excluded from any benefits of such system.<sup>40</sup>

Immigration and foreign land ownership marked the reorganization period. Still, in 1946 a third of the national territory belonged to twenty-five almost entirely foreign companies, while cheap land attracted foreign immigrants. The country not only changed its land ownership system but also changed its demographic composition, infused with immigrants, especially in the urban areas.<sup>41</sup>

The seventy-year period between the end of the war in 1870 and the arrival of the first examples of modern architecture in the 1940s and 1950s can be divided in two periods: after the War of the Triple Alliance, between 1876 and 1935, within a liberal state; and after 1935, a period marked by internal turmoil that led to military hegemony, a civil war in 1947, and a thirty-five-year dictatorship, from 1957 to 1989.

### **Pendulum relationships**

The War of the Triple Alliance had an impact not only on Paraguay, but also on the formation of South America's nations and balance of power as the hegemonic countries designed a way to keep their frontiers to a minimum. Paraguay was spared total destruction perhaps because its preservation would temper the conflicts between the two major countries in the regions by serving as a buffer. Uruguay shares this buffer condition. Argentina and Brazil being the hegemonic powers in the region, Paraguay would turn towards one or the other of the two countries according to its own will and according to the two neighbors' particular economic and political circumstances for years to come.<sup>42</sup>

From 1870 to 1903 Paraguay was under a double dependency: it depended on Argentina economically, and on Brazil politically. In fact, the first political parties—the

Colorado and the Liberal—were a result of the direct influence of Argentina and Brazil. By 1904 Argentina's government supported the Liberal Party revolution, leaving Argentina with the preponderant relationship with Paraguay. A policy of entente between Brazil and Argentina had divided the region of the Rio de la Plata into two diplomatic axes—one was Argentina and Paraguay, the other Brazil and Uruguay. This balance would change over the years. But in particular for Paraguay, Argentina's friendship was necessary to keep the economy flowing and open through the Paraná and Paraguay rivers that passed through Argentina's territory to reach the sea. This relationship did not change substantially until Paraguay initiated a more accelerated development in the late 1930s after the Chaco War.<sup>43</sup>

In the 1930s Paraguay was considered an economic and political appendage of Argentina, with direct intromission of internal politics, sometimes even allowing for revolutionary factions to conspire in Argentinean territory. Paraguay was a geopolitical prisoner of Argentina as the navigability of the Paraná and Paraguay rivers were essential to Paraguay's economy. Furthermore, the only land communication was also with Argentina through a train connection established in 1912. Brazil, through Getulio Vargas's government (1930-1945), resumed and deepened the relationships with Paraguay, with a short hiatus due to the Chaco War against Bolivia (1932-35) for which Paraguay needed Argentina's strong support to navigate rivers and get the war equipment necessary for the war. Brazil declared itself neutral during this conflict. Only two decades later did Paraguay find an exit to the Rio de la Plata dependency with a newly developed land connection between Brazil and Paraguay in what historians' label "*marcha hacia el este*".

1940, the end of the period analyzed in this section, marks the arrival of the first examples of modern architecture to Paraguay. Coincidentally this is also a period of significant changes nationally and changes in worldwide economic structures due to World War II. Regionally nationalism expanded to take control of productive entities previously in the hands of foreign capital. Regional states became “major economic agents” within an internal protectionist economy. Argentina and Brazil created or nationalized important infrastructure companies. In Paraguay, the 1940s mark the end of the liberal era and the beginning of a strong military hegemony.<sup>44</sup>

In 1948 the political party Asociación Nacional Republicana—Partido Colorado became dominant. From 1949 to 1954 Paraguay was again influenced by the active politics of Argentina through the government of Juan Perón, with the help of Paraguayans who wanted to continue the economic dependency with Argentina as a strategy by the Peronist government to integrate South America under the leadership of Perón. On the Brazilian side, the government of Dutra (1946-51) had maintained and strengthened the bilateral relationships with Paraguay through its Military Mission, Cultural Mission, and a branch of the Banco do Brazil. Finally, in 1954 with the arrival of the government of Alfredo Stroessner, of known sympathy with Brazil and who had gone to military school there, Paraguay took a decisive turn towards Brazil with the development of a highway system that connected Paraguay with Brazilian ports, eliminating Paraguay’s dependency on the port at Buenos Aires.<sup>45</sup>

The relationships between Paraguay and Brazil and Paraguay and Argentina have their monuments in the examples of modern architecture arriving to Paraguay in the second part of the twentieth century. This architecture is testament to the dependency born out of the geographic configuration of the region and the War of the Triple Alliance.

## Resetting

Paraguay understandably had a slow recovery after suffering nearly total human and economic bankruptcy and staying under the influence, direct or indirect, of overpowering Argentina and Brazil for years to come. In the coming years the country moved back and forth in its relationship with the hegemonic powers of the region and evidence of this relationship is found in the depth and breadth of the modern architecture.

The re-start of Paraguay as a nation-state—what is known the “Second Paraguayan Republic”—started with an increased economic and political dependency, particularly from Argentina and Brazil. As the case studies presented below demonstrate, Paraguay’s geopolitical *pendular* leniencies became evident in the breath of modern architecture project and a swing of the geopolitical pendulum toward Brazil after the 1940s affected the development of modern architecture in Paraguay from then to the present.

The disadvantage of being a landlocked country remained in place and the effects of war lingered over Paraguay by the time modern architecture arrived, evidenced in the type of projects undertaken by the state. In the early twentieth century civil architecture was more prominent than public architecture, which was mostly housed in pre-war buildings or repurposed civil buildings. This tendency changed in the late 1940s and intensified in the 1950s through the state’s architectural endeavors. A new state plan based on a nationalist agenda asked for new state buildings utilizing a modern language, echoing the modern language found in neighboring nations, particularly that of Brazil, which deeply connected the image of state and modern architecture.

The particular geopolitical condition of Paraguay at the arrival of modern architecture presents an important field of study, which is the development of modern

architecture within the region. It is in this field of study that “The Triple Alliance in Reverse” stands as the beginning of a much-needed study of the circulation of ideas and development of modern architecture within a region peripheral to the traditional centers of power. Asunción, Paraguay’s capital city and its relatively more urban environment, is the best case-study setting for the development of this thesis’s main claims and therefore will be the next step in the study of modern architecture in Paraguay and its relation to the War of the Triple Alliance.



## **Chapter Two: Arrival**

### **THE LANDING AREA, ASUNCIÓN ITS HISTORY, AND THE INSERTION OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE**

How did Asunción, the capital city of Paraguay, a city on the periphery of the colonized world, end up welcoming modern architecture?<sup>46</sup> What were the reasons for the adoption of modern architecture in the capital city of Paraguay? What is the impact and intention of the location of modern architecture within the city fabric? This section draws a profile of Asunción, indicating where most of the examples of modern architecture are located in order to understand the reasons and uses of modern architecture in Paraguay.

In this chapter I will develop two instrumental topics related to the development of modern architecture in Paraguay: the country's rural condition and the insertion of the case studies in the city fabric. First, I will assess the dual urban-rural condition of Asunción, where most of the examples of modern architecture are located, and explain the characteristics of the reception area. Second, I will analyze the insertion of the buildings within the city's fabric and the growth dynamic of Asunción, exposing the state's strategy and the different intentions and intensities of the influences of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay on Paraguay's modern architecture.

As I have established in the introductory chapter, the rural condition of Paraguay in the 1950s was in part a consequence of the slow development of the country greatly due to the effects of the War of the Triple Alliance. The insertion of modern architecture within the city, apart from exposing the borderline rural condition of the most populated city in Paraguay, responds fundamentally to the intentions of the government as an expression of what we could call the second state reorganization and dynamic—an insertion in the city plan that communicates the dynamic of geopolitical relationships

with the three main influencers of modern architecture in Paraguay—Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay.

### ASUNCION FOUNDATIONS

In the historiography of Paraguay since the arrival of the Spaniards and until later in the development of the country, the terms “Paraguay” and “Asunción” are synonymous. Asunción was the center of development established by the Spaniards in 1537, while the inhabitants of the region, the native Guaraní territorial group *Carió*, had, unlike the Incas or the Aztecs, a semi-nomadic existence with no concentrated urbanization and thus no precolonial urban centers.<sup>47</sup>

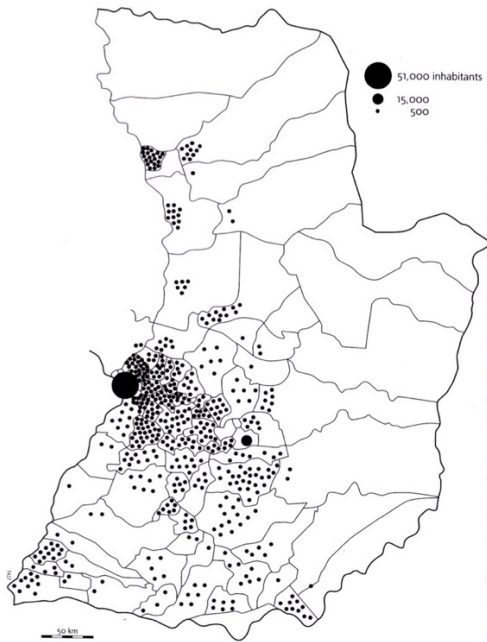


Figure 2.1: The map depicts the geographical distribution of population within the most populated region of the country, the Region Oriental, and Asunción as the densest of them in post-war Paraguay of 1887. J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Rural Paraguay 1870-1963: A Geography of Progress, Plunder and Poverty*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, v. 1 (Madrid [Spain]: Frankfurt am Main [Germany]: Iberoamericana; Vervuert, 2009), 46.

Consequently, Asunción has been since colonial times the center of development of the country and the recipient of the biggest urban concentration in the country, although it was a center with a low density when compared to the neighboring capital cities. It is in this framework of its centrality that Asunción became the main stage of modern architecture in the country without denying the existence of few examples in the late 1950s and 1960s in other cities, such as Ciudad del Este or Encarnación. But for the purposes of this thesis and in order to trace the connection of modern architecture in Paraguay and the War of the Triple Alliance, I will explain which were the conditions of the city that received the first and greatest number of examples of modern architecture in the country. Understanding the state of development of the urban condition of Asunción and the implementation of modern architecture within its fabric clarifies the connection of modern architecture as an expression of the regional relationships and the intentions behind the adoption of modern architecture.



Figure 2.2: Aerial view of Asunción and the three projects analyzed in this thesis marked in red: bottom left the Hotel Guaraní (1958-61), bottom center the ANR (1953), and bottom right the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay (1958). In orange, the colonial center; and in yellow and green two important buildings from the Lopez's period, in yellow The National Pantheon of the Heroes (1863-1936) and in green the entryway to XIX century Asunción the central train station (1856). Source: base map <https://www.google.com/maps/@-25.2817169,-57.6319952,1982m/data=!3m1!1e3>

The location of the three case studies further analyzed in this thesis portrays the conditions of insertion of modern architecture within a slowly developing city of Asunción as well as the directionality of the growth of the city. The condition and direction of urban growth expose the need for understanding not only the buildings as

isolated objects, but as part of directed urban actions and even ideological tools of the state. As we have seen in the introduction, not since the government of Carlos Antonio Lopez (1844-62) before the onset of the War of the Triple Alliance did the national government endeavor to such an extent to undertake the construction of public buildings and infrastructure. By introducing the city of Asunción and its origins and growth, I am addressing the issues of insertion and adequacy of modern architecture within the context of Paraguay's biggest city as well as the still-existing links to the effects left by the conflict of the War of the Triple Alliance.

This section is divided in two parts:

1. Asunción 1950s – Insertion – Profile – Relations
2. Asunción – Centrality – Rural-Urban Condition

#### **ASUNCIÓN 1950S – INSERTION – PROFILE – RELATIONS**

How big of a city was Asunción in the 1950s, particularly when compared to the neighboring capitals? Asunción in the 1950s, the decade of the construction of the three case studies analyzed in this thesis, had slightly more than 200,000 inhabitants, contrasting strikingly with the increasingly larger capital cities of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay.<sup>49</sup> Mid twentieth-century Latin America represents a key moment of transformation from rural to urban in the major cities of the continent, this transformation visible in cases like Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo which had nearly a million more citizens than Asunción in the 1950s. Architectural discourse, imbedded with the politics of developmentalism, and foreign aid imprinted the future urban growth of the region.<sup>50</sup> And most significantly, the state and modern architecture were intimately related in the construction of the future of the cities and the state image. Asunción as the capital of Paraguay, even though lacking the size of other capital cities of the region, also ascribed

to the state presence and association with modern architecture. How did modern architecture interact with the exiting very low-density city and its inhabitants? How did the scale of the buildings and their location impact Asunción in the 1950s?

The contrast of modern architecture—and, in particular, the three examples within the city fabric further analyzed in this thesis—highlights the slow pace of construction in the country compared to Buenos Aires, Montevideo, or Rio de Janeiro, as well as Brasilia (1956-60) with 5.800 Km<sup>2</sup> of modern architecture and planning built in less than five years. According to geographer J. M. G. Kleinpenning, who studied Paraguay's development from 1515 to 1963, three circumstances caused the low and slow urbanization of the country and its overall rural condition in the 1950s: first, a small industrial sector that didn't attract city dwellers; second, rural migrants preferring emigration to neighboring Argentina than to Asunción; and, third, in the late 1950s migration towards and east and north of the country in search of better prospects for small farmers and landless families.<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, Asunción in the 1950s was the biggest city in Paraguay and it accounted for barely fifty percent of total urban population of the country.<sup>52</sup> In fact, only one-third of the population of the country were city dwellers, leaving the rest of the population scattered mostly within the eastern region between homesteads and small towns of fewer than 1,000 inhabitants.<sup>53</sup> Comparatively, Uruguay, the smallest of the former Triple Alliance members, was one of the world's most urbanized states, with two million inhabitants, having an urban population of seventy-eight percent. Within the region the former alliance members were urbanizing rapidly, with Paraguay falling behind.<sup>54</sup>

With one of the weakest economies of the region between 1870 and 1963, Paraguay had a gross domestic product per capita in 1950 estimated at \$84, while the figure for Argentina was \$575 and \$174 for Brazil.<sup>55</sup> Still, within a subsistence economy the city of Asunción started showcasing modern architecture that was highly contrasting with the existing built environment.

Paraguayan authorities were certainly not searching to solve densification problems; the quest was for a connection with the image of development towards which the country's government was striving. As it had happened more prominently in Brazil, state and architecture were part of the same *developmentalist* agenda of the state, with modern architecture as its physical embodiment.<sup>56</sup>

#### **CASE STUDIES: LOCATION AND INSERTION STRATEGY**

As there is intention in the process of selecting the design and designer of the buildings that identify with a modern state building, location also becomes instrumental, following an agenda as well. The three projects analyzed in this thesis are inserted in three different city conditions and they offer clues to their importance and instrumentality. The city's low density in an almost rural condition clashes with the architectural objects themselves and signals as well the directionality of the city growth.

The Asociación Nacional Republicana (ANR) - Partido Colorado headquarters, the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, and the Hotel Guaraní respond to *developmentalists'* state strategies. The ANR and the Hotel Guaraní form part of the state's image and the Biblioteca Nacional, a gift from the Argentinean government to the Paraguayan government, was part of a diplomatic transaction, perhaps partly based on the future needed collaboration with Paraguay for the construction of a dam in the Paraná river that marks the border between the two countries. The location of these projects had

an official agenda; therefore, their location is as important as their materiality. A detailed understanding of each building strategy can be seen in the analyses of the projects in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Nevertheless, in order to make the link between the project and the city, Asunción's general characteristics must be laid out.

**ASUNCIÓN GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, BREVE HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT, INDEPENDENCE, AND URBAN EVOLUTION**

As in every aspect of Paraguay's history, nature informs the building of a nation and its built environment, and Asunción's foundation is not an exception. Present-day Asunción grew from the initial fort established in 1537 on the banks of the Paraguay River by a Spanish expedition. The conquerors settled on a river bend from which the city grew to the south and east—that is, simply uphill and away from the river.





Figure 2.4: Asunción end of XVIII city plan before the Ordinances of the Indies were adopted, streets accommodate to soil and weather conditions. In torrential rains water traces what would be streets that spills towards the river while houses are located on virtual islands, 1787, Cartography by Ramon De Cesar. Source: Javier Rodriguez-Alcalá Archives. Also found in Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción: CEDODAL, 2010), 46.

Founded in 1537 by a contingent of Spaniards, this political region had been populated by nomads who left less substantial physical marks on the landscape. Slow growth characterized Asunción from the time of the colonies until the 1950s. The city evolved from a mostly nature-dominated urban plan in which virtual rivers, fed by torrential rains, created the paths dictating the placement of the streets to a more structured system loosely based on the typical Ordinance of the Indies.<sup>58</sup>



Figure 2.5: Carió Engraving by Ulrich Schmidl, 1559. Schmidl accompanied the expeditions from Buenos Aires to Paraguay and beyond and wrote an account of its journey. [*Illustrations de Vera historia admirandae cujusdam navigationis...*] / [Non identifié]; Ulrich Schmidl, aut. du texte, 1599, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b2000034n>.

Through colonial times and the early years of independence, the city form was causal and the organization was mostly zoned departing from the plaza, the street surrounding it, and following two main axes: the river and, parallel to the river, the *Calle Mayor* or main street. Early on, topographic characteristics and a fire in 1543 conditioned the morphology of the city. Prompted by the fire, the city developed an open organization and disperse edification in order to avoid future fires. Ten years after independence, from 1821 to 1824, the dictator of the country, Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia, mimicked the

implantation of the *Ordinances for the Discovery, the Population, and Pacification of the Indies*, modifying the internal structure of Asunción by reconfiguring the streets into a Cartesian conformation.<sup>59</sup> Architects and urbanists Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase conclude that Francia's modification was the instance that prompted Asunción's dissociation from the natural conditions of the place. Architectural historian Ramon Gutierrez adds in his description of Asunción from the 1500s to the early 1800s that even with the changes—Francia's rectification—Asunción continued to have rural characteristics with no abrupt changes between an urban and a rural landscape. In other words, the city of Asunción maintained its rural condition through the beginning of the nineteenth century, which changed minimally with the addition of new infrastructure after the 1840s with a state that invested in infrastructure and poised interest in invigoration through international commercial exchanges.<sup>60</sup>



Figure 2.6.: Rectificación Francia's government 1821 drawn over the 1787 De Cesar city map by Javier Corvalán Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase, *Asunción: Análisis Histórico-Ambiental de Su Imagen Urbana: Album Grafico* ([Asunción, Paraguay: El Lector, 1987, 35.





Figure 2.7 Manzana de la Rivera with the different typologies one of which predates the rectification of streets ordered by Francia in 1821. Source: Conjunto de casas de la Manzana de la Rivera. Fotografía de archivo de la Secretaría Nacional de Cultura. “2011\_06\_23MANZANA-RIVERA-Baja.jpg (JPEG Image, 787 × 523 Pixels) - Scaled (80%),” accessed May 4, 2016, [http://asuncioncentrohistorico.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/2011\\_06\\_23MANZANA-RIVERA-baja.jpg](http://asuncioncentrohistorico.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/2011_06_23MANZANA-RIVERA-baja.jpg)

The second half of the nineteenth century marks the arrival of new infrastructure as well as the abandonment of the colonial and vernacular architecture towards more cosmopolitan examples. These changes meant the elimination of architectural features that were present in colonial architecture and particularly of spatial characteristics resulting from the mixture of the habits of colonial and native inhabitation. One example of changes in the built environment was the elimination of external galleries facing the street, replacing them with a façade architecture, and the insertion of new programs with a new architectonic language. Examples of the latter were the train station, the presidential palace, and the National Pantheon. The city was slowly growing and

consolidating its grid system while the tendency of growth was reinforced by the establishment of clear reference points to the city through the new programs.<sup>61</sup>

By the 1860s, the city had two defined edges: one towards the northwest—the port, customs, and *Recova*, representing the new government's openness towards the international commerce—and to the southeast the train station, a connection with the country at large. Between the two poles the city was consolidating the future historic axis of the city and dotting it with new buildings, specifically the National Pantheon, the presidential palace, and the national theatre, among other new infrastructure and private buildings.<sup>62</sup>

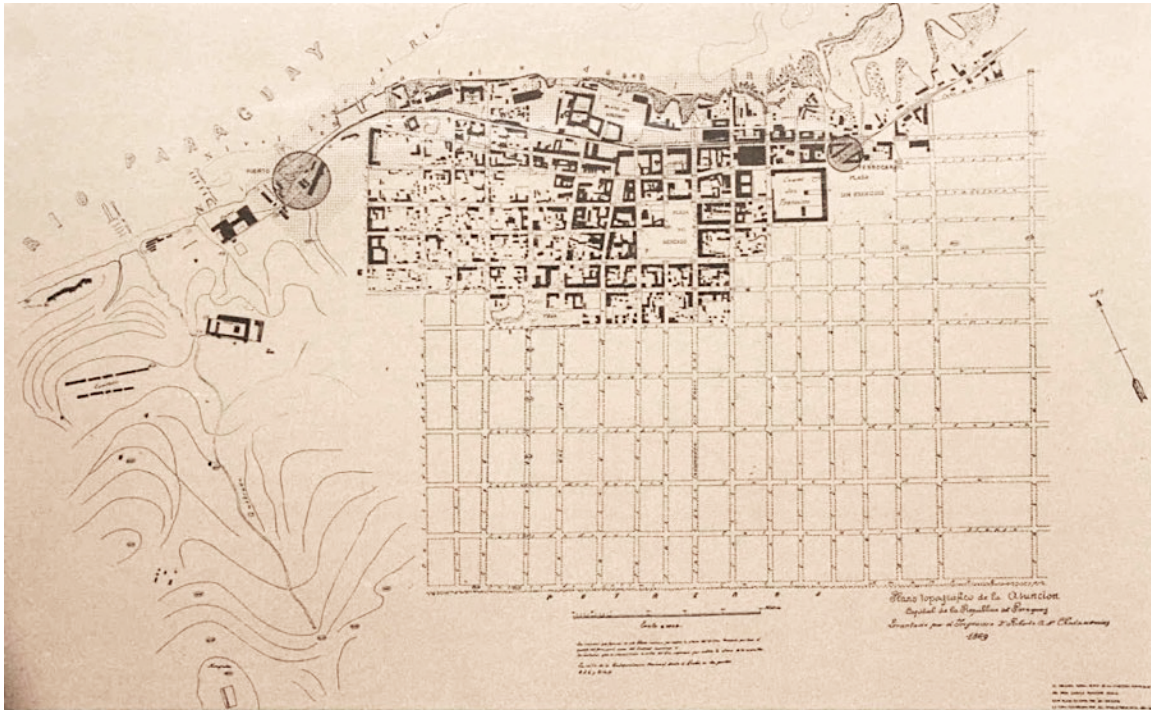


Figure 2.8: Asunción in 1869 the edge of town to the east is marked by the Train Station and convent later to become a plaza. Design over Roberto Chodasiewicz plan of 1869 in *Asunción: Análisis Histórico-Ambiental de Su Imagen Urbana: Album Grafico*. <https://lorenzozucolillo.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/asu-chodasiewicz-1869-copia.jpg>. Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase, *Asunción: Análisis Histórico-Ambiental de Su Imagen Urbana: Album Grafico* (Asunción, Paraguay: El Lector, 1987), 33.

### ASUNCIÓN AFTER THE WAR

Occupied by the allied forces, mostly Brazilian, after the War of the Triple Alliance Asunción was pillaged and transformed into hotels, restaurants, shops, gambling dens, among the infrastructure that had existed before the war; when the occupation ended, the city was in ruins. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the most remarkable buildings in town were still the ones built during the Lopez era, and the most ambitious ones started under the presidency of Marshal Lopez, such as the Presidential

Palace and the National Pantheon, were unfinished. The country was slowly recovering and the capital city was just another example of the dire post-war condition.<sup>63</sup>

Marked by increased immigration at the end of the nineteenth century and during the beginning of twentieth century, Asunción saw an increase in the use of a Renaissance reminiscence and other “classicist” revivals and even a modernist (Catalán) language in the majority of residential projects.<sup>64</sup> The city grew within the limits established by the train station and the port, with no important examples of state architecture. As densification within the city increased, the administration moved into providing infrastructure and urban equipment to the city—among other things, the expansion of the electric services and the tramway line. The increased value of the land within the city center produced the subdivision of the lots and the introduction of the *casa chorizo* model, which extended into the semi-suburban area beyond the train station, conforming the primarily urban dwelling zone.<sup>65</sup> The tramway line brought the extension in connectivity with the weekend villa houses beyond the center and the immediate urban small-lot area. As a result of the War of the Triple Alliance, a weak state with a mostly privatized economy produced an architecture that had among its most notable buildings residential projects which drove the city’s growth beyond the train station and towards the southeast of the historic core on an axis dotted by weekend villages and formerly rural estates.<sup>66</sup>



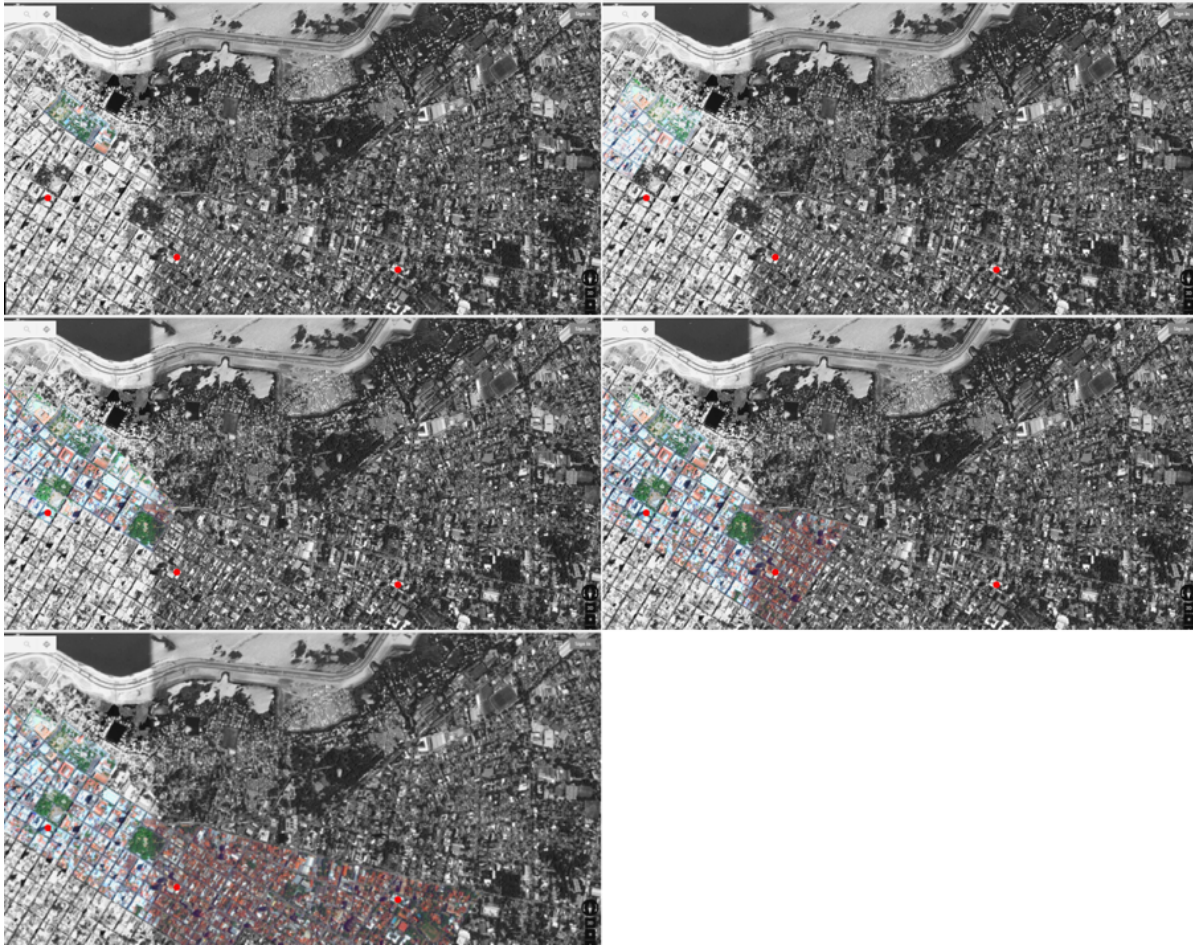


Figure 2.9: In this current satellite view the red dots represent the case study analyzed in this thesis. The map colors showing the historic growth of the city and portraying the relevance of the projects location within city growth. The Hotel Guarani is situated toward the edges of the XIX pre-Triple Alliance city core, the ANR outside the limits of the Pre War city and within the late XIX century city majorly surrounded by single family dwellings, and finally the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay within an almost rural environment of weekend villas and former rural estates.

Fifty-nine years after the end of the War of the Triple Alliance, in a short visit to Asunción, Le Corbusier, who was looking towards South America in search of opportunities to apply his own theories, comments on the evident low density of the city:



A small town set in an admirable vegetation: 50 percent grass of an understandable rawness next to the 50 percent of red earth; immense trees entirely lavender, yellow, or shrimp pink. Women in White tunics with scarves on their heads, and those Indian houses in the suburbs of the town that are the most total act of devotion of a sensitive soul: the ground around them tamped earth, extraordinarily clean, and always well maintained - a red carpet, “reception at the Elysée” style, a small house in wood siding or in bamboo, the joints filled with earth mortar. And, of course, whitewash under the portico of bamboo or twisted beams supporting a vine (as wherever people want to live well) (Le Corbusier, 1929).<sup>67</sup>



Figure 2.10: Sketch by Le Corbusier while visiting Asunción in October 1929, Le Corbusier Sketchbooks, 1914-1948. Le Corbusier and Françoise de Francieu, *Le Corbusier Sketchbooks*, Architectural History Foundation/MIT Press Series 4 (New York: Cambridge, Mass: Architectural History Foundation; MIT Press, 1981), B4.

For Rio de Janeiro Le Corbusier envisions a linear city extended over the “morros” and in his next stop after Asunción envisions the high-rise profile of Buenos Aires reflecting on the Rio de la Plata, but in Asunción he finds that there is no need for his futuristic views for a future metropolis—not exactly what Le Corbusier was looking for when experimenting with his ideas of urban development. Thus, in Le Corbusier we find a politely poetic appreciation as he moves on to the next possible options.



Figure 2.11: Le Corbusier, Development plan for Rio de Janeiro, 1929. (“Fondation Le Corbusier - Home - Urbanisme” 2016)

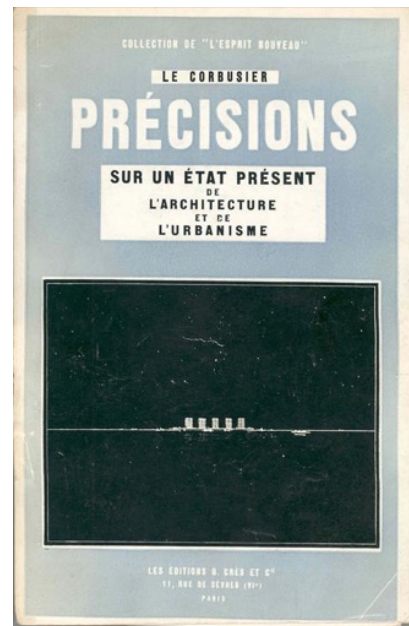


Figure 2.12: Cover of Précisions Sur un Etat Present de L’Architecture et de L’Urbanisme depicting Buenos Aires future of future skyscrapers as beacons of the possible future reflecting their silhouette on the Rio de La Plata horizon. (“Fondation Le Corbusier - Home - Précisions Sur Un État Présent de L’architecture et de L’urbanisme” 2016)

The Swiss architect had no interest in rural Asunción and in fact only twenty years later the city of Asunción would start showing connectivity with the world of modern architecture, doing so as an inward process and becoming a ground for a regional exchange of modern architecture. In contrast with the social concern of modern architecture at the time Le Corbusier arrived in South America, in the years following World War I, the utility of it is towards the construction of the forward-looking *developmentalist* ideas entrenched in the region. The will of the state to build a new image made the connection with modern architecture, and inadvertently this homogenizing process of placing modern architecture as a state image highlights the stresses that the country as a modern state had gone through. Perhaps by using modern architecture the Paraguayan state was trying to erase any cultural differences to maintain social order, economic prosperity, and governance as part of the modern nation-making process. We must remember that in the 1950s a civil war that took place in 1947 was still fresh in the psyche of the country. Paraguay was looking for an era of Paz y Progreso, peace and progress, which a government controlled by the Asociación Nacional Republicana - Colorado Party, seemed to offer.

What we can observe in the Asunción of the 1950s is a move towards an idea of nation with a building iconography reminiscent of development. The aim towards a new state and a new future, and perhaps to mark the divide with the past, capitalized on the will of the region's strongest neighbors to erase the old injuries as a mode of forgetting past aggressions, with architectural gifts in tow.<sup>68</sup>

## CASE STUDIES

The three examples analyzed in this thesis portray the condition of the city in the 1950s as well as the evolution of the city fabric from colonial times to the twentieth century. The positioning of each project within the city decodes the condition and the intentions:

- a. The Asociacion Nacional Republicana is located in what in the 1950s was still mostly single-family urban dwellings of Asunción.
- b. The Biblioteca Nacional, located in what at the time of the project was the extension of the city, was situated in an area dominated by weekend houses and former rural estates. The lot was in fact part of a rural property subdivided and bought by the Argentinean government.
- c. The Hotel Guaraní is located in front of a set of four plazas cross distance from the Panteon Nacional de los Heroes, with a direct visual connection to the river and mere five blocks from the colonial foundational core.

From the three projects, the Asociacion Nacional Republicana headquarters and the Hotel Guaraní are respectively indirectly and directly connected to the Paraguayan government, while the Biblioteca Nacional was a gift from the Argentinean government to the Paraguayan government. One can argue that the ANR is a far-fetched, looking-forward project built during a still uncertain time but within a process of consolidation of power within the government party.

The ANR represents a foot towards city expansion and part of the future politics of decentralization adopted by the government, which is expressed in the 1958 new municipal regulations, or *Plan regulador de la ciudad de Asunción*.<sup>69</sup> Only two blocks away of the Central Train Station, the edge of town prior to the War of the Triple

Alliance, and within a mostly single-family urban setting established during the time of the liberal government, the impact of a 5,500 m<sup>2</sup> four-story building becomes a statement of party and government power.

The Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, a gift from the Argentinean government initially planned to be an arts and crafts school, with 2,045 m<sup>2</sup> away from the center within a still sparsely populated area, presages the geopolitical turn of the Paraguayan government away from Argentina and towards the eastern neighbor Brazil. And finally the Hotel Guaraní represents the state at its prime in expressing its will to adopt modern architecture as its language, with 237,753 m<sup>2</sup> and thirteen stories in the central location of pre-1870 Asunción. A statement of the will to continue into the modernization process started in the 1860s, the hotel comes with the twist of Brazilian authorship.

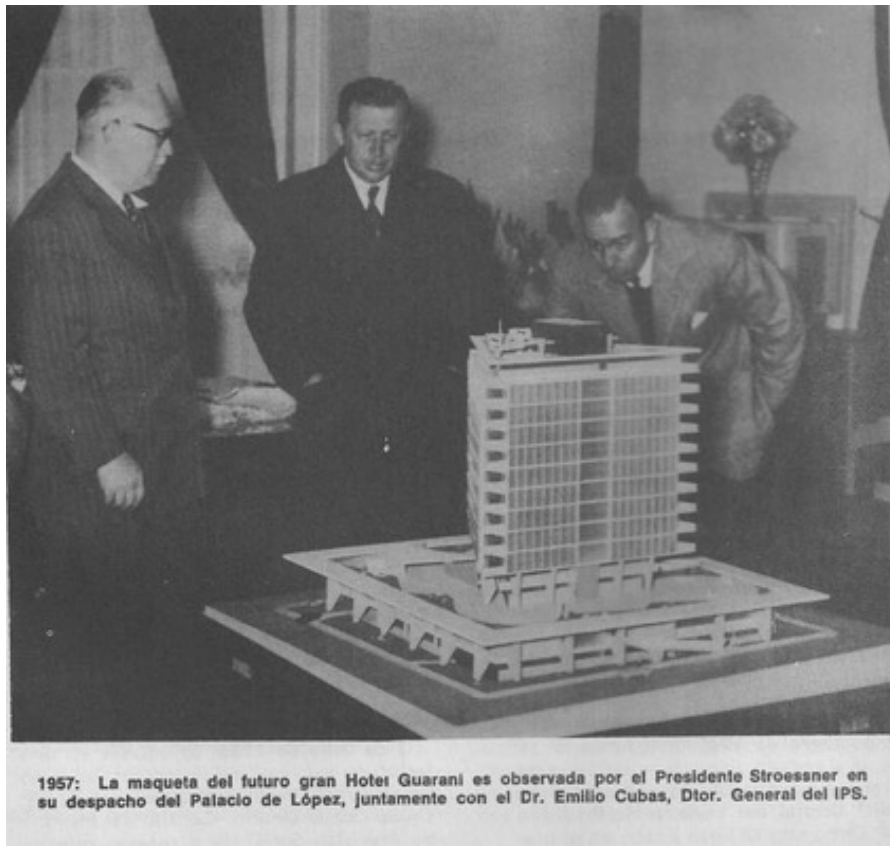


Figure 2.13: Hotel Guaraní model presented to the dictator Stroessner, 1957 “Maqueta Hotel Guaraní – Fotos Del Paraguay,” accessed February 2, 2016, <http://paraguay.fotos.com.py/maqueta-del-hotel-guarani/maqueta-hotel-guarani/>.

These three examples of modern architecture and their contrasting presence within the capital city help to explain the condition of Asunción in the 1950s, as well as the growth of the city and the consolidation of the state. Modern architecture in Asunción becomes a tool for understanding present and the past and even for foreseeing the future of the city and the country.

## Chapter Three: Case Studies

### ASOCIACIÓN NACIONAL REPUBLICANA (ANR) PARTIDO COLORADO HEADQUARTERS



Figure 3.1: Aerial view Hotel Guaraní and its location within present day Asunción  
Architects: Homero Duarte and José Escobar. Source: base map:  
“25°17'12.6"S 57°37'42.2"W,” 25°17'12.6"S 57°37'42.2"W, accessed  
September 2, 2016,

Architects: Homero Duarte and José Escobar

Supervisors: Gustavo Storm and Tomas Romero Pereira

Building Company: Compañía Argentina de Construcciones Christiani & Nielsen S.A.

Year of completion: 1953

Location: 25°17'12.6"S 57°37'42.2"W

Street Address: 25 de Mayo N° 842 c/ Tacuary

Plans: Originals non-accessible

Client: Asociación Nacional Republicana – Partido Colorado

Structure: Structural concrete

Other Materials: Brick, ceramic, stucco, and glass.

Area: Lot = 50 m x 50 m = 2500 M2

Built-Up Area: = 5000 ~ M2

The ANR – Partido Colorado Headquarters is an example of the Uruguayan influence of modern architecture in Paraguay. Both architects in charge of the design are alumni of the Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad de la República – Uruguay (FARQ-UDELAR). Jose Escobar (FARQ-UDELAR 1940-47) and Homero Duarte (FARQ-UDELAR 1936-43) were the leading architects of the project under the supervision of architect Tomas Romero Pereira and engineer Gustavo Storm. Romero Pereira, who received his architecture degree from the Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Nacional de La Plata -Argentina, was interim president of Paraguay (May-July 1954), Minister of Interior (1955-1956), Minister of Public Works (1961-1964), and Minister Without Portfolio (1969 until his death), illustrating the strong connection of the Colorado Party and the Government.<sup>70</sup>




REPÚBLICA ORIENTAL DEL URUGUAY  
UNIVERSIDAD DE LA REPÚBLICA

# ANALES

DE  
LA FACULTAD DE ARQUITECTURA

ENTREGA N.º 4



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## CUERPO DOCENTE DE LA FACULTAD DE ARQUITECTURA EN EL AÑO 1941

●

### PROYECTOS DE ARQUITECTURA

1.º al 3er. Año

PROFESOR TITULAR  
Arquitecto Daniel Rocco

PROFESORES ADJUNTOS  
Arquitecto Rodolfo Vigouroux  
" Rafael Ruano  
" Juan A. Rius  
" Rosendo Quinteiro  
" Octavio De los Campos

ASISTENTES HONORARIOS  
Arqto. Julio Pietropinto (Taller Ruano)  
" Luis A. Teperino (Taller Quinteiro)  
" Raúl Mateo Fernández (Taller De los Campos)  
" Ricardo Secco García (Taller Vigouroux)  
" Ildefonso Azortegui (Taller Rocco)

4.º y 5.º Años

PROFESORES TITULARES  
Arquitecto Mauricio Cravotto  
Julio Vilamajó

ASISTENTE HONORARIO  
Arquitecto Mario Paysé Reyes (Taller Vilamajó)

SEGUNDO AÑO

Apolo Bengoeche Justino	Chaves Darío G.
Acquistapace Homero	Curbelo Amanda
Alexandrovich Miguel	
Alberti Calafat Pedro	Escobar Justo José
Amado Norma Elena	Dellepere Orestes
Borda Francisco	Degiorgis Omar
Butler Soudriers Augusto	Farro Antonio
Bettossini Enrique	Falco Carlos
Collares Carlos	González Almeida Ramón
Colom Vicente	Gandós García Héctor
Calabria Homero	
Correa Silverio Rubén	Heber Usher Alberto

CUARTO AÑO

Accossano Héctor	Oliver Santiago
Bove Ceriani Raúl	Orozco Ariel
Barbé Juan José	
Butler César	Poggi Héctor
Barreiro Natalio	Puñeyro Chain Carlos
Cazeaux Augusto	Ribeiro Demetrio
Cagliani Washington	Rodríguez Antonio
Duarte Homero	Selasco María Luisa
Dodera Carlos	Sayaguis Alberto
Dubra Luis M.	Schiavo Roberto
Fassio Enrique	Saavedra Carlos Alberto
Ferrer Parsifal	Tagliaferro Arnaldo
Garderes Julio C.	Tozzo Carmelo
Hareau Carlos	Tortorella Luis
Ingold M. Elena	Tizze José Pedro
Michaelsson Alejandro	Vázquez Rolli Héctor
Muñiz Ramírez José	Zerbino José P.

Figure 3.2: List of students at the School of Architecture in Montevideo 1942. Escobar in Second year and Duarte in fourth year in 1942. Studio professors for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year Julio Vilamajó and Mauricio Cravotto. (Universidad de la República (Uruguay), ed., *Anales* [Montevideo, 1938], 141, 146, and 148.

The ANR headquarters represents one of the early examples of the use of modern architecture as a language to be identified with the state in Paraguay after the 1950s. And since the project was commissioned directly to architects Homero Duarte and José Escobar we can infer that the architect's youth and connection with modern architectural

ideas, evident through their education lineage to the FARQ-UDELAR, were part of the appeal that led to being offered the job.

Even though the ANR is not a state institution per se, it was at the moment and until present day, with brief interruptions, Paraguay's governing party. After the 1947 civil war, the Colorado party emerged as the new ruling party and after a period of instability that ended in 1954 the party stayed in such condition until 1989, and has been the ruling party intermittently until present day. As the Colorado party was to be associated with state government, its physical legibility aligned with the one that the state would use as its institutional image. Even though Architect Homero Duarte asserted, in regards of the ANR building project, that he and architect Jose Escobar had total freedom on issues such as approach to the project, institutional image, and functional solutions, in Duarte's own words,

Aparte de eso teníamos total libertad en lo que refiere al partido arquitectónico, la imagen institucional y las soluciones funcionales específicas. No tuvimos ningún tipo de interferencia en ese sentido y empezamos a plantear la propuesta con total libertad y sin ningún tipo de preconceptos. Homero Duarte, 1984<sup>71</sup>

But the fact that Romero Pereira had handpicked Duarte and Escobar reveals the leaders of the ANR – Colorado Party intentions towards an institutional presence associated with a “modern image” for the “*partido*” and, by extension, for the nation.<sup>72</sup>

This ambitious endeavor in 1950 was still a leap of faith for the clients and builders considering that Paraguay was not stabilized politically until 1954. Homero Duarte himself comments on the project and the difficulties on taking the project to completion in such an environment. Most of the companies “elegantly” dodged the request and finally the company Christiani & Nielsen took the job. The building company was an Argentinean subsidiary of a Swedish building company seasoned in the use of

concrete and other materials typically used in modern architecture. These are the conditions within which two Paraguayan architects educated in the school of architecture the Facultad de Arquitectura de la Republica in Montevideo Uruguay (FARQ-UDELAR) designed and built a 5,500 m<sup>2</sup> structure for housing the headquarters of the Asociación Nacional Republicana - Partido Colorado.

As previously mentioned, the architects in charge of the project, Escobar and Duarte, received their degrees from the FARQ-UDELAR, a common practice for Paraguayans wanting to obtain a degree in architecture, since Paraguay's first architecture school would be founded in 1957. As stated previously, the project was directly adjudicated to Duarte and Escobar by architect Tomas Romero Pereira, who was in charge of overseeing the works of this and all Colorado-party endeavors. Romero Pereira was therefore client and overseer of the project.

The fact that Romero Pereira was overseer of the project tells us the importance of the building as a trendsetter and flag of the new way of the now governing *Partido Colorado* and its hopes for continuing in power. Not only was Romero Pereira a leader of the *Partido Colorado*, but he also served as interim president of the country from May 1954 until August of the same year and “promoted a political accord which supported the candidacy of General Alfredo Stroessner who became president on August 15<sup>th</sup> that same year.” Stroessner stayed in power until 1989. Thus, the ANR project serves as physical evidence of the intentions of a party that after the civil war of 1947 was settling in place for good.<sup>73</sup>

The building company was the Argentinean subsidiary of Christiani and Nielsen, which alerts us to the inadequacy of the Paraguayan construction companies to deal with the construction of a building that asked for up-to-date building technology and the risk

taken in the use of materials that were not traditional to the local builders. As Homero Duarte's son indicates in an interview with Javier Rodriguez regarding the need to adapt, invent, and improvise in order to implement new architectural design: "Work in Paraguay with new technologies made for the research of alternatives in the sense that the materials envisioned for the project were not traditional and in order to achieve the envisioned design the architect had to resort to adaptations." This need for adaptation is what took the architects to find an alternative to the ceramic covering utilized through the building that was in common use in Montevideo's contemporary architecture.<sup>74</sup> Concrete elaboration and construction use encompassed industries and resources that Paraguayan companies had not yet established. As a matter of fact, the national industry of concrete, or Industria Nacional del Cemento, was established in 1954. The national steel company of Paraguay (ACEPAR) was another endeavor by the new government, established later, in the late 1970s.<sup>75</sup>



Figure 3.3: Workers preparing the formwork in a building site in Asunción, 1959.  
*Paraguay and Its Leader Pres. A. Stroessner*. - Frank Scherschel, Life Magazine - Google Arts & Culture,” Google Cultural Institute, accessed September 16, 2016,  
<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/u/0/asset/paraguay-and-its-leader-pres-a-stroessner/mQHd7gtJh5UCEQ>.

The building of the Asociación Nacional Republicana – Partido Colorado was certainly a large venture within Paraguay’s economic and urban context. Occupying 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> and covering a surface of 5,500 m<sup>2</sup>, the project was as challenging as it was innovative in the context of mid twentieth century Asunción, which was still lagging behind the neighboring capital cities in the region.

## Clues documentation and sources

The executive plans of the building are not available to the public, perhaps as part of the secretiveness associated to the Asociación Nacional Republicana that, due to the long-lasting relationship of party and state, has been under scrutiny since the fall of the dictatorship via a coup d'état in 1989. My inquiries have gone unanswered, perhaps as a result of the party's uneasiness with public openness or accountability. Therefore my analysis will rely on first-hand information such as interviews with architect Homero Duarte in the Paraguayan magazine *Cota Cero* and another interview with Homero Duarte's son by architectural historian Javier Rodríguez-Alcalá, and secondary sources such as: present day areal images, photographs from a 1959 *Life* magazine photographic essay *Paraguay and Its leader A. Stroessner* by Frank Scherschel, contemporary photographs of the building and its surroundings, and the characteristics of the lot according to present-day land registry from the city of Asunción municipality. Being aware of this uncharacteristic start of an analysis deprived of the original plans and drawings of the building, but understanding the importance of keeping this example as fundamental in the development of this particular thesis as well as it being a stepping stone for the development of the study of modern architectural history in Paraguay, I will cross-analyze the building by relying on clues offered by the previously mentioned documentation available. With this material in hand, I will work to uncover how the building of the Asociación Nacional Republicana was organized and specifically what clues it can offer to the dissemination of modern ideas in the region of Latin America, specifically of the former Triple Alliance members that in this thesis I argue has influenced the production of modern architecture in Paraguay.



Figure 3.4: Downtown Asunción 1959 the image offers an idea of the scale of the city only six years after the completion of the project of the ANR. Frank Scherschel photographer. Life Magazine. (“Alfredo Stroessner - Google Arts & Culture” 2016)  
<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/u/0/entity/%2Fm%2F016db7?hl=en#>

### **Placement and building in context**

Immersed in a neighborhood of early twentieth-century single-family dwellings of an eclectic language with “classicist ingredients”, as architectural historian Ramón Gutierrez points out, the building of the ANR seems to be arisen from a siesta.<sup>76</sup> A typical parcel in the area varies from around ten to twenty meters on the front facing the street and deepens to thirty to fifty meters. These proportions are a result of the subdivision of the parcels as Asuncion urbanized.<sup>77</sup> We can only imagine the impact on the scale of the area made by the new ANR building, nested in the block occupying at



least four of the typical parcels in the area and rising four levels over the one-story single-family houses on a ten-meter-wide street.



Figure 3.5: Present site plan of the Asociación Nacional Republicana lot within area's lot subdivision context. Source: *Mapa Catastral de Asunción*, accessed August 27, 2015, <http://sig.mca.gov.py>.

On what at the time of the construction of the building was the edge of downtown, the building site sits only blocks away from the city's main train station, an antebellum building from 1861. This closeness to the gateway to nineteenth-century Asunción reminds us of the reasons of such late arrival of modern architecture and the process to industrialization by the War of the Triple Alliance War. The location of the building on a street that links downtown to the nineteenth-century suburbs signals the direction of



growth and the expansion of the city after the 1950s to the north and southeast, away from the river and towards higher grounds. For more information about Asunción's growth, refer to Chapter Two.

Did the clients, the Colorado Party officials, choose the location of the building with a particular site impact or intention in mind? And if so, did the ANR planning team intend for the location of the building to become the new link to development, a reference point when leaving downtown Asunción towards the suburbs populated by what is called "liberal architecture" reminding the urban dweller of their rising power?

### **Building and immediate surrounding**

As explained in the Asunción chapter, the building was located in what at the time of the project was an upper-middle-class neighborhood and surrounded by early nineteenth-century urban houses. The ANR headquarters sits on a fairly important street exiting colonial and nineteenth-century Asunción and connecting with the suburban expansion of the town through the use of a tramway line that was established in 1904. Adding the width of the street to the typical XIX century urban setting of the area the intervention was certainly unique in its size, uses, and typology.

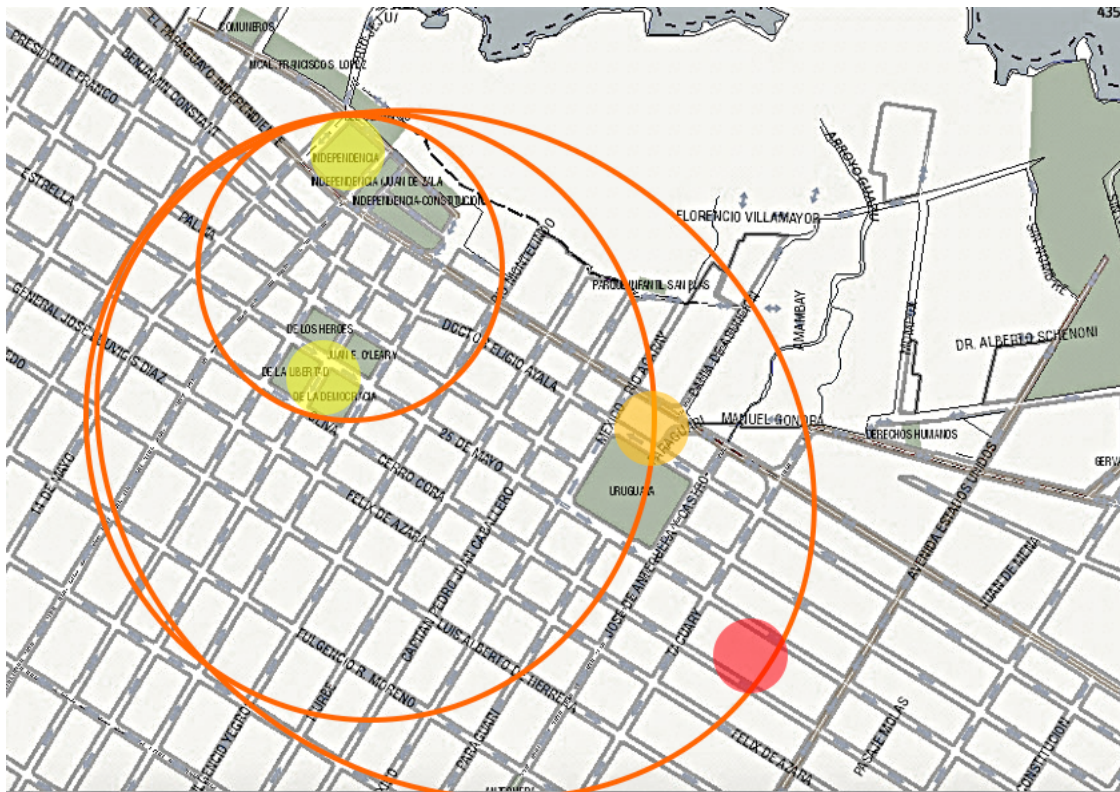


Figure 3.6: In red the ANR and its connections to the nineteenth-century train station and access to town and two institutional centers the Plaza de Armas and the four plaza Pantheon complex. Notice growth and change of lot size occurs towards South East and away from the river.

Sitting on a connecting street to downtown Asunción that links directly to the city's late 1800s access, Plaza Uruguay lies in front of the old train station and links to the four central plazas that make for an emblematic town center, conformed by the institutional presence of the Panteón Nacional de los Héroes, a neoclassical building started by Alejandro Ravizza, an Italian builder in charge of several iconic building during the heyday of the Lopez's presidency and not finished until after the Chaco War of 1932-35, and the complex of four central plazas surrounded by the building of the

present-day Banco Nacional de Fomento and ten years later also housing the Hotel Guaraní, another example of modern architecture in the country further analyzed in this thesis.<sup>78</sup> The same Plaza Uruguay has a direct link to the old institutional center of Asunción, the Plaza de Armas, with the congress, the cathedral, and the presidential palace by the foundational spot of the Bahía de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción. Therefore, the location of the building, with its three different connections to the foundational eighteenth-century center, the nineteenth-century emblematic four-plaza setting, and the urban growth of the early twentieth century sits close to the town's center, but with a firm foot towards the city's growth, perhaps as a matter of choice.

### **From the fundamental shade to contemporary rationality**

The building develops and evolves from the shade, the intermediate space that is the genesis of and connective element to all buildings from pre-Columbian times to the present in Paraguay.<sup>79</sup> Its most important elements, such as the access, the loggia, and the gathering space, inside the building are composed primarily by the production of the most elemental and fundamental elements in a sub-tropical environment, shade. The architects rely on the building themselves as mitigating devices for the harsh sun and torrential rains, allowing for cross ventilation through the access, gallery space surrounding the building, and the height for projecting shade into the central gathering space. A brise soleil system covering all the windows makes them almost irrelevant since no real direct contact of glass and sun occurs throughout the building that is constantly looking for protection from the inclement tropical sun. That shade links the different functions of the building and guides the users.



Figure 3.7: North-east façade from the east north direction. Volumetric movement eases transition of scale. J.M. Boettner S/D. Javier Rodríguez Alcalá Archives. Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase, *Asunción: Análisis Histórico-Ambiental de Su Imagen Urbana: Album Grafico* ([Asunción, Paraguay: El Lector, 1987), 41.

Another important component that defines the project is the fundamental programmatic requirement of a gathering space for the ANR acolytes. From the shade and towards the central courtyard space the building forms and conforms spaces with a modern language that fits also the program, producing a rhythmic progression of shade, light, and shade which houses the different programmatic requirements. Balconies and terraces are all open to the central space, multiplying the gathering opportunities of the space. The production of gathering space and shade are the guiding compositional elements of the project.

### **General Composition and volumetric relations**

Architects Homero Duarte and Jose Escobar decided to sit the building of the ANR on a podium in order to elevate and dignify it, not an unlikely move in modern architecture and a reminder of the close relationship of modern and classic architecture. The composition conformed by three volumes embracing a courtyard fosters two different relationships: one welcoming and opening towards the immediate street and the other an all-centralized focus towards the interior courtyard. The building, originally surrounded by two neighboring houses, extends to the width of the lot. When we approach the building from the northeast, the volume parallel to the street recedes, allowing for a perception of the building in its entirety. A second volume advancing towards the municipal line extends the perception of the façade onto the L-shaped volume.



Figure 3.8: Northeast façade. Taken in 2014 shows a series of intervention to the building from the murals to the enclosing of the front yard. Image by the Author.

The two frontal volumes intersect and the façade unfolds, recovering visual impact for the north-east direction traveler and for the east-north pedestrian. The east-north pedestrian, on the other hand, confronts a softened approach to the change of scale of the façade space in between the old and new, mediating an air and light space between old and new and maintaining the municipal line in use. The two main volumes intersect and in this intersection, the enclosing walls disappear. The structure stands alone and spaces out, liberating the center of the space. The façade transforms its language to

respond to the access space. Horizontality takes preponderance there in big letters the name of the institution.



Figure 3.9: Basic structural plan of the ANR. Modules and module varies as needed when required by the function.

Now on *pilotis* the building opens to foster the main access and foyer a “tree forest” geared to the gathering of “individuals” of the party, as Homero Duarte himself describes the spatiality and purposes of the building access. The volumes move, recede, elevate, and intersect, producing spaces and spatial relationships and never really detaching from one another. The spatial relationships of the building are the result of a constant push and pull of its conforming elements.

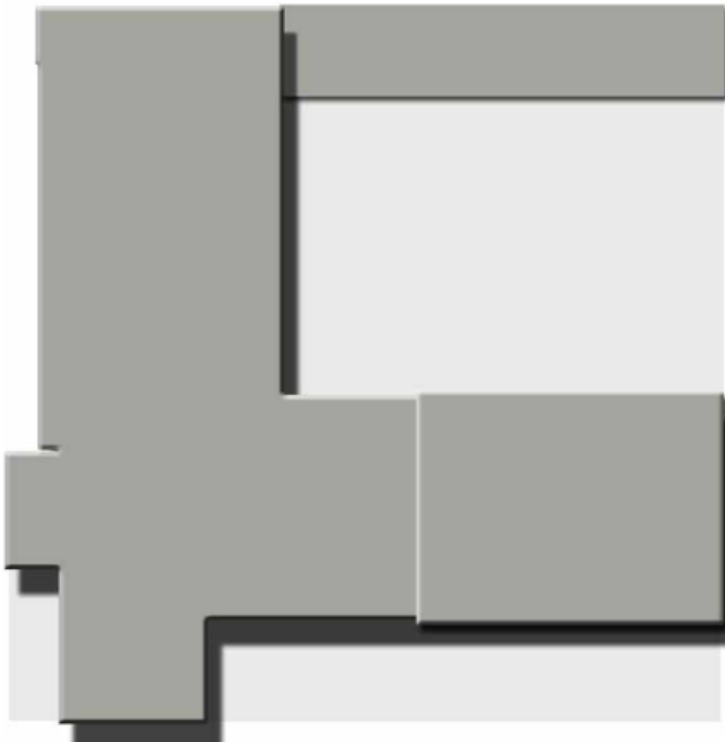


Figure 3.10: Roof abstraction showing occupation of the lot

The second volume of the composition advances towards the street and stops at the very edge of the municipal line, lifting itself on pilotis and conforming a loggia that opens towards the street as a sort of balcony. This balcony offers another option for gathering, hinting at the street as a congregating space. This southwest façade volume spanning the full extension of the lot to the very back of it leaving enough space from the neighboring houses for light and ventilation.





Figure 3.11: Interior courtyard and main space of the Asociación Nacional Republicana. Frank Scherschel for Life Magazine. 1959. "Paraguay and Its Leader Pres. A. Stroessner. - Frank Scherschel - Google Arts & Culture," *Google Cultural Institute*, accessed September 16, 2016, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/u/0/asset/paraguay-and-its-leader-pres-a-stroessner/OAEEyQjxO5oBnw>.

Following the length of the second volume and turning clockwise parallel to the street at the very back of the lot a third one-story volume completes the U that encloses and interior congregational patio. While the whole first level of the two main volumes are planned on a double height, the third volume develops one simple and single level almost simply as a supporting platform to allow for terrace balcony space towards the interior courtyard. The whole composition is for the central space and intermediate spaces.



Figure 3.12: Engineering School. Montevideo, Uruguay. Julio Vilamajó, 1939-1944.  
Julio Vilamajó and Aurelio Lucchini, *Julio Vilamajó: Su Arquitectura*  
(Montevideo: Universidad de la República, Instituto de Historia de la  
Arquitectura, 1970), 44.

### Here is looking at you

When observing at the volumetric disposition of the ANR we cannot but look back to architect Julio Vilamajó's work, in particular the School of Engineering in Montevideo (1937-38). The School of Engineering in Montevideo sits a short distance from the School of Architecture and because of its size and location, on top of a hill and facing the river, is an improbable miss for any Montevidean and much less for young architecture students such as Homero Duarte and Jose Escobar, who were students at the FARQ-UdelaR where Vilamajó was a professor. The play of volumes and the treatment of the façade, including the subdued tones of the finishing, seem to have fed the mental library of these Paraguayan students throughout their studies in Uruguay. Observing the elongated volumes and structural organization of the ANR reminds us of the elongation,

stacking of volumes, and structural organization at the School of Engineering in Montevideo.<sup>80</sup>



Figure 3.13: Leaving the building dictator Stroessner and entourage. Frank Scherschel for Life Magazine. 1959. "Paraguay and Its Leader Pres. A. Stroessner. - Frank Scherschel - Google Arts & Culture," *Google Cultural Institute*, accessed September 16, 2016, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/u/0/asset/paraguay-and-it-s-leader-pres-a-stroessner/LAFc5IpIhTVIzw>.

A flight of wide staircases draws the visitor up to the access foyer, newly defined level zero or piano nobile, where the building develops its main elements with a purposeful relevance of the intermediate and congregating spaces. As the building opens to this main level it funnels the exterior directly to the patio or interior plaza that the building embraces and with a subtle option for a change of direction to access to the interior of the building. Several elements work together to emphasize and articulate the main access to the building: the wide ascending staircases, the act of vacating the volume at the change of direction of the composition, the change in the rhythm and size of fenestration on top of the access space, and an overlapping cornice roof covering the access adjacent section of the first volume. In synthesis, accessing the building occurs in an emblematic and deliberate way, utilizing all the building elements to produce a processional entrance towards the key space of the building, the gathering space, and to the adjacent enclosed office and meeting spaces.

Public and semipublic spaces are directly connected and channeled through the access space or receiving foyer that allows the flow towards the interior courtyard. All the movements are geared to embrace the courtyard that would hold the main purpose of the building: the gathering of *correligionarios*, or members of the political party, for monthly conventions. Services and offices are placed respectively on the lower and upper levels, framing the openness of the main level.

The access volume along the main-street façade meets the second volume perpendicularly and from that the second volume jetties towards the street, while the third terraced single-story volume, serving the only purpose of balcony towards the central space, finishes the U that surrounds the courtyard. As for the fourth side of the courtyard, a simple dividing wall acts as a backdrop for public gatherings. As of present days, the

third one-story volume has disappeared, replaced by an unfinished structure. However, in a set of images taken by Frank Scherschel for *Life* magazine in 1959 we can see the third volume still standing, acting mostly as a balcony towards the gathering space. In its interior the main level opens and connects through a continuous gallery, embracing a courtyard that is open to the elements but coverable through shading devices.



Figure 3.14: Central courtyard covered with temporary shading device. Depicted by Frank Scherschel in his 1959 *Life* magazine article. “Paraguay and Its Leader Pres. A. Stroessner. - Frank Scherschel - Google Arts & Culture,” *Google Cultural Institute*, accessed September 19, 2016, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/u/2/asset/paraguay-and-it-s-leader-pres-a-stroessner/EgEUE4zGv1I0Xw>.

From the street, the perception is of a clear and processional access for a government party headquarters and state emblematic building. The façade design privileges the perception by allowing one to experience the building rather than the first sight reading of all of the components of the project therefore. The act of walking within the building and traversing the open foyer with shade preceding an inkling of the light of the open courtyard guides the visitor. The combination of movement and materiality finalizes the reading of the building.

The grid-like structure offers multiple opportunities for the building as a platform for different experiences and uses of the space. As mentioned before, the building reveals its spatiality through the experience of proceeding through the spaces and in particular by being guided by the penumbra space that is of fundamental importance in a sub-tropical weather. The structural rhythm is expressed through a basic four-by-four grid that the architects manipulate to guide the user through the different spaces, from light to shade, and by changing the section of the pillars from circular to rectangular, which changes the rhythm into the access, anticipating the access to the courtyard center of the building's composition.





Figure 3.15: Front façade multiplies perception by advancing the volume towards the street.

### **Materials and Structures**

A four-by-four grid organizes the building towards the interior patio to which all the volumes in the composition open through gallery space or as balconies. The rationalist language used in the building gives clues to the filiation of the designers and the intentions for the building use. The architects designed with a rationalist language very much in tone with the Uruguayan school.

During their studies at FARQ-UDELAR between 1936 and 1947 both Duarte and Escobar were exposed to what was the result of a shift in the way of teaching and understanding architecture in Uruguay. The exposure of the then students to an

architecture as technique in which the architect is an “active technician and promoter of changes, as well as team organizer and in need of a generalist education” would be present in the way that these architects approached the project.<sup>81</sup> In this particular, Homero Duarte’s son in an interview comments on the way in which his father approached a project by always designing integrally from the design, to pre-calculus, and construction.

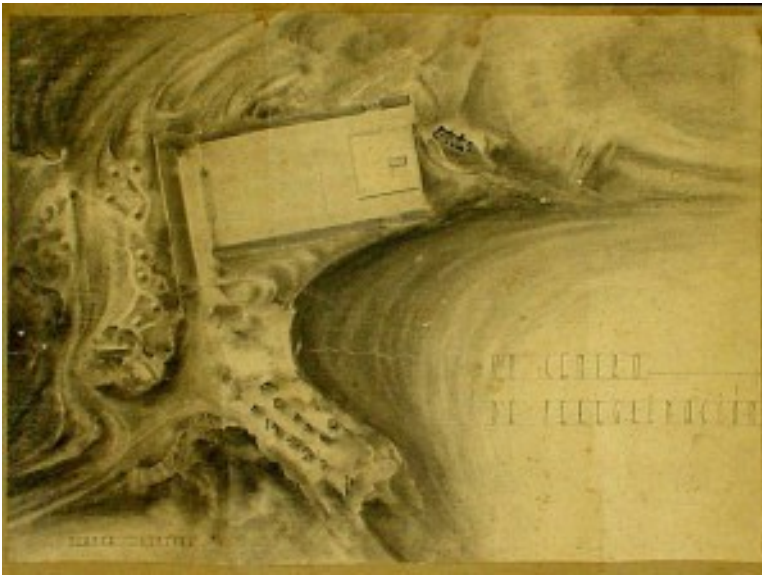


Figure 3.16: Homero Duarte’s studio project of a monument for Humaitá at the FARQ-UdelaR, CA. 1938. “Notas para la Consideración de la Obra de Homero Duarte en el Escenario de la Modernidad Plástica y Arquitectónica del Paraguay.,” Lorenzo Zuccolillo, accessed August 27, 2015, <https://lorenzozucolillo.wordpress.com/2012/02/27/notas-para-la-consideracion-de-la-obra-de-homero-duarte-en-el-escenario-de-la-modernidad-plastica-y-arquitectonica-del-paraguay/>.

Professors such as Julio Vilamajó and Mauricio Cravotto were teaching studio at the school during both of the architects’ studies at the FARQ-UDELAR. The examples of projects that I have used to link modern architecture in Uruguay and Paraguay are



authored by Homero Duarte, mostly because José Escobar, even though younger than Duarte, died only six years after the completion of the ANR project. In one of the houses that Homero Duarte designed in Asunción, we can observe certain formal parallelism with Vilamajó's work in Uruguay. (Figures 4.6 and 4.7) The fenestration and the volumetric treatment, the verticality, the elevated frontal patio, the elevation of the building on a platform where the building sits, a crowning cornice on top with its distinguishable chamfer, the rhythm of the fenestration, garden terraces, and the general stucco treatment of the exterior among other elements connect these two examples. Vilamajó's house sits five minutes away from the architecture school on a main connecting avenue, most likely a *paso obligado* for Duarte during his strolls in Montevideo. The correspondence of their work in the images, with approximately fifteen years of difference, testifies to the affinities between Duarte and Vilamajó's work.<sup>82</sup>



Figure 3.17 Casa Vilamajó, Montevideo, Uruguay, 1930. Architect: Julio Vilamajó. Source: [http://www.farq.edu.uy/pati/o/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/IH\\_A\\_ext04-e1338843800435.jpg](http://www.farq.edu.uy/pati/o/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/IH_A_ext04-e1338843800435.jpg).



Figure 3.18: : Single Family dwelling, Homero Duarte, Asunción, Paraguay, CA 1940. Source: Javier Rodriguez Alcalá archives.

Purposefully in this thesis I highlight the regional relationships as the guiding forces that influenced the development of modern architecture in Paraguay. In this task I am not denying the genealogy of modern architecture, as it is easily seen in the projects by Vilamajó. The presence of elements that references Vilamajo's work to the work of Loos, Le Corbusier, and the Bauhaus is clear from the spatial organization to the material expression of his designs.<sup>83</sup> The work of Vilamajó, more than mimicking, expresses his development of his own language within the development of architecture and its encounter with new technology and its material expression, influencing generations of Uruguayan and Paraguayan architecture students, as the ANR building testifies.

Materiality, on one hand, is another example of the connection between modern architecture in Uruguay and Paraguay and, on the other, is an expression of the local responses and adaptations both in Paraguayan and Uruguayan modern architecture. That

is the case of the use and treatment of materials in the ANR. Ceramic tiles as finishing material were widely used in Uruguay. At the ANR Duarte and Escobar use it for covering the basamento and several surfaces throughout the exterior of the building. An example of the use of ceramic tiles in Uruguayan architecture is Vilamajó's project for the grocery store annex to the "La Americana" bakery (1944) in Montevideo, used in the same direction and resourced from a local producer.<sup>84</sup> In terms of the material itself, Paraguayan architects had to use resourcefulness to create an experimental tile to match their needs for this project because this kind of tile was not produced in Paraguay. Conversely, the tile used by Vilamajó was a local product from Punta del Este, Uruguay, a reference to the locality of the projects and also to the material limitations of Paraguay of the 1950s.<sup>85</sup>

The connection between Uruguayan and Paraguayan architecture is particularly evident in Homero Duarte's life and work. Homero Duarte had experience working in Uruguay, first as a student and later as a professional. Between 1943 and 1955 he remained in Paraguay to work, returning to Uruguay to work in 1955. Duarte's works in Uruguay in fact outnumbered his works in Paraguay; accordingly, the relationship between Paraguayan and Uruguayan architecture in the work of Homero Duarte is not a vague idea, but a fact.



Figure 3.19: Ceramic tile detail on the “La Americana” bakery façade, Montevideo, Julio Vilamajó, 1944. Julio Source: Vilamajó and Aurelio Lucchini, *Julio Vilamajó: Su Arquitectura* (Montevideo: Universidad de la República, Instituto de Historia de la Arquitectura, 1970), 123.

The program as well as the spatial organization reminds us to the Casa del Fascio (1933-36) by Giuseppe Terragni in Como, Italy. Even though we only have an approximation to the plans of the ANR, the comparison of program and spatiality regarding the idea of political gathering space—a tool for the dissemination of political ideas—links these two projects. There are as well parallels in ideologies behind the clients for the two projects.

Not only the program but the plan organization, as well as elements such as the entry and the exterior treatment of the building envelope, as well as the use of a reticular structural system made evident through the volume, reference the ANR to the Casa dei Fascio. In both cases the buildings are open and welcoming, but still somehow closed to the exterior, opening to the inside only once the visitor has traversed a sort of foyer composed by vertical elements that accept the visitor to the common ground of the individuals who belong to the political faction.



Figure 3.20: Casa del Fascio, Como, Italy. Giuseppe Terragni, 1933-36. Montage. Source: Peter Eisenman, Giuseppe Terragni, and Manfredo Tafuri, *Giuseppe Terragni: Transformations, Decompositions, Critiques* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2003), 8.



Figure 3.21: Central courtyard ANR, Frank Scherschel, *Life* magazine, 1959.

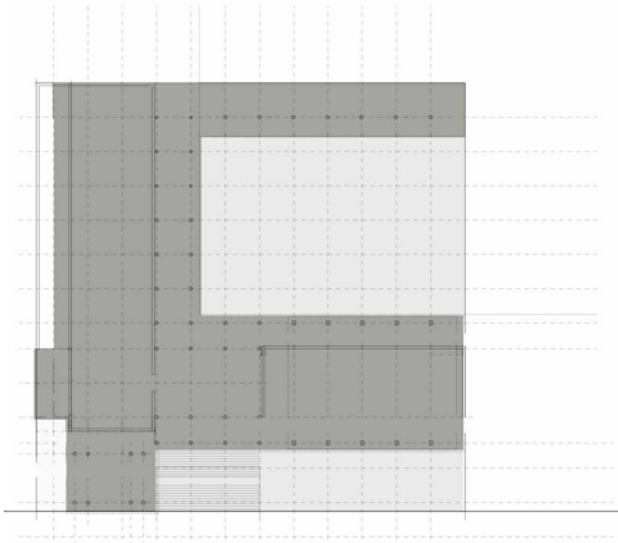


Figure 3.22: Left: Plan ANR

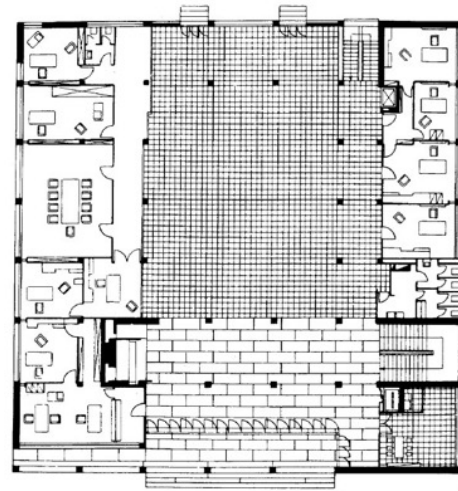


Figure 3.23: Plan Casa del Fascio. “Casa Del Fascio, Como,” accessed December 2, 2016, <https://eng.archinform.net/projekte/1247.htm>.

In the realm of the dissemination of ideas within the region composed by Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Paraguay, the Asociación Nacional Republicana - Partido Colorado headquarters stands as an example of what we can call the Uruguayan-Paraguayan vector. Even though this project uses many characteristics of the Uruguayan school, it takes also formal elements and responses of the climate such as the *corredor jere*, gallery surrounding a building, and the *kulata jovai*, house of confronted spaces, spaces found already in the Guaraní and colonial architecture.<sup>86</sup>

Even more with the ANR example we can find a position and answers that relate to essential spatial relationships pre-nineteenth-century typical of architecture Paraguay. In the urban response offered by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century architecture the mediating space between private and public disappears and is supplanted by a façade that effectively separates interior and exterior without offering mediation. Duarte and Escobar seem to recover the relationship and recreate them in the elements used in the intermediate spaces.

The architects of the ANR by way of a new program offer a transition between the urban building and the institutional building as well as the vernacular, or early colonial, use of space and the nineteenth-century use of space. The building in a third of its facades, following the adjacent line of buildings, stays on top of the municipal line and after this transition recedes to offer access to the building in a more ceremonial way with a ceremonial stair and setback of the building. But again the movement here does not stop in recessing the building, but instead brings back the *corredor jere* and the much-needed shade. The *culata jovai* comes by way of the sheltered space in between volumes the access area and another seemingly intermediate space by elevating the volume that projects itself towards the street, stopping right on the edge of the municipal line and making the space into a balcony that replicates the street relationship of its neighbor but adding the possibility of public engagement and use of public space towards the street as a gathering space. The architects therefore are bringing back traditional spatial uses with a contemporary language with certain engagement with to the surrounding conditions.

Are we here in front of what will be Paraguayan modern architecture, or are we still talking about modern architecture in Paraguay?<sup>87</sup> Handling of scale, uses, and spatiality references a modern architecture in Paraguay that understands its roots as well

as relation to its time in the technology at hand, even though this technology has to bridge the inadequacy of the industrialization of the country.<sup>88</sup>

Even though Duarte and Escobar might not have been confronted directly with the late-nineteenth-century question of style, they were certainly exposed to the results at the FARQ-UDELAR. As previously mentioned, between the 1930s and 1950s the FARQ went through a transitioning period from the Beaux Arts-based curriculum to the new 1952 curriculum, and professors such as Julio Vilamajó or Mauricio Cravotto were working with a contemporary language in the profession, which certainly shaped the students' outcomes.<sup>89</sup> Paraguay in the 1940s and 1950s was a country still looking for a reaffirmation of its nationhood as response to its near disintegration as a country during and in the aftermath of the War of the Triple Alliance and to the subsequent efforts toward reconstruction and redefinition that culminated in a civil revolution of 1947; in synthesis, the nation was eagerly looking for a national style, one that expressed its ability to become a modern nation. In this sense Paraguay was very much dealing with the nation-building issues that echo European postindustrial architects' concerns in the eighteenth century. What image should a nation have and in what style should its architects build—in particular, the public institutions of the country? The project of the ANR presents not only an example of the formal and material influences of the Uruguayan architecture school in modern architecture in Paraguay; it also presents the first examples of the consolidation of the ANR - Colorado Party and the State.

Uruguay's influences on modern architecture in Paraguay is present and upheld by the Asociacion Nacional Republicana – Partido Colorado headquarters marking the work of architects who received their degrees from the Farq-Udelar, such as Homero Duarte and Jose Escobar. The Uruguayan influence becomes a building block for the



development of the architecture profession in Paraguay. In 1957 a group of architects, of whom a majority had studied at the Farq –UdelaR, founded the first architecture school in the country. The first architecture school in Paraguay had its core program modeled in the 1952 Uruguayan counterpart, demonstrating that the influence of modern architecture from Uruguay had become enduring in the future generations of architects.

## BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL DEL PARAGUAY



Figure 3.24: Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay site map. Source: Maureen Thompson  
Marin Maureen Thompson Marín author of the thesis “Puesta en Valor del  
edificio de Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay”

Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay

Architects: Unknown

Year of completion: 1958

Location: 25°17'14.3"S 57°36'59.6"W

Street Address: De la Residenta 820 c/ Perú

Client: Argentinean Consulate in Asunción

Structure: Structural concrete

Other Materials: Brick, ceramic, stucco, and glass

Built Surface: 2045 m<sup>2</sup>



Figure 3.25: Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay façade. SD. Pedro Gamarra Doldán, “En El 125 Aniversario de La Biblioteca Nacional,” *Edición Impresa - ABC Color* (Asunción, Paraguay), Feb. 17, 2013.



Figure 3.26: Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay. CA 1980 Source: Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay Archives

In the realm of the connection between the War of the Triple Alliance and the development of modern architecture in Paraguay, the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, a gift from the Argentinean to the Paraguayan government, represents Argentinean influence in modern architecture in Paraguay. I will discuss the Argentinean influence in the development of modern architecture in Paraguay through the analysis of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay through two topics, one regarding geopolitical conditions and relations between Argentina and Paraguay and the other regarding the degree of influence that modern architecture from Argentina had in the development of modern architecture in Paraguay.

## **Building Documentation Quest**

First-hand documentation would have been of crucial interest to determine important details of the project, through questions such as: Who were the authors and how was the project conceived? How was this project developed and built? Once and again I found myself knocking on government doors—this time the Argentinean consulate and the library itself, but there is no recollection of the details of the project. This lack of basic information is a trademark of modern architecture in Paraguay, a fact that makes every effort to shed light on modern architecture in Paraguay a contribution to the study of architecture, and that has forced me to look for alternative ways of analyzing the building and finding relevant information for the future study of architecture in the country.

The main surviving information about this binational architectural exchange is the building itself and basic architectural drawings that were re-drawn when the building was added to in 1981, all available at the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay as well as in the final degree work by architect Maureen Thompson “Puesta en Valor de la Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay.” In regards to the genesis of the project, my inquiries resulted in a continuous loop from the library to the Argentinean Consulate, without uncovering any answers. Through the use of comparison with other similar architectural exchanges and by understanding of the geopolitical situation of the region as well as the development of modern architecture in Argentina, I will trace a profile of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay that aligns with the main position stated by this thesis.

## **Silent and Away**

The dimensions and simplicity of the project of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay when compared with the ANR and the Hotel Guaraní analyzed in this thesis

prompt questions such as: How relevant is the Argentinean influence in modern architecture in Paraguay, especially when compared to Brazil's and Uruguay's influence? Does the size of the project or investment demonstrate lack of interest from the giver? Is this project evidence of the geopolitical turning away by Paraguay from Argentina and towards Brazil? In consular relationships, when the gift is small is the expected reciprocation smaller? Is Argentina's largely temperate climate so different from the Paraguay's subtropical conditions that implementation of its modern architecture showed less practicality compared with, for example, neighboring Brazil?

Can we infer that a smaller physical presence and the location of this Argentine-Paraguayan architectural present could be evidence of a mild governmental agenda from the giving country, in this case Argentina, than with the more straightforward institutional representation associated with the Hotel Guaraní or the Asociación Nacional Republicana – Partido Colorado headquarters? In a comparison of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay project with another architectural gift to the Paraguayan government, this time from the Brazilian government, the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil (1952-1961), an experimental school with a decidedly ambitious program including classrooms, a gymnasium, a pool, and an auditorium, we can almost visualize the bilateral relationships between Paraguay and Brazil and Argentina respectively and which one in future diplomatic endeavors Paraguay would end up favoring.

Another situation that might have affected the dimension of the architectural gift from the Argentine to the Paraguayan government is the political instability of Argentina at the time of the project. Between 1955 and 1962 Argentineans had four different presidents, typically deposed and instated through undemocratic means. Therefore, with

such internal political instability it is most likely that building a project for another country would not have been among the high priorities of the country.

How did modern architecture and the project of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay travel through the region in regards to climate? The question of adaptability is relevant in responding to the question of the degrees of influence that modern architecture from Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay had on Paraguayan modern architecture. How well did modern architecture of Argentinean, Brazilian, and Uruguayan origin adapt to climatic conditions in Paraguay? The project of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay poses that question of adaptability in the context of Argentina's mostly temperate climate, much different from Paraguay's mostly subtropical climate. How would a project travel from a temperate climate to a subtropical one? Will the architecture produced for a temperate climate be easily adaptable to the Paraguayan subtropical climate? In the case of the Uruguayan influence, the fact that the project previously analyzed in this thesis, the Asociación Nacional Republicana – Partido Colorado, was authored by Paraguayans makes for that extra step covered by the empirical knowledge of the local conditions; therefore, its assimilation of influence will be already sifted through the knowledge of the local conditions.

The sociopolitical conditions and climate differences guide the analysis of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, marking the influence that modern architecture from Argentina could have had on modern architecture in Paraguay. Therefore, in this chapter I will explore the characteristics of the Argentinean-Paraguayan modern architecture exchange.

## **Programmatic evidences**

Fui a verla. Había progresado, enseñando en la facultad y colaboraba con un grupo de arquitectos jóvenes que estaban haciendo en Tucumán algo que después me mostró: una fábrica o escuela, o sanatorio. No sé, todo es igual, ya se sabe: en esos edificios tanto se puede instalar mañana un turno como una maternidad. Es lo que ellos llaman funcionalismo. Ernesto Sábato<sup>90</sup>

The building of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay was originally planned to be a school of arts and crafts, but ended up being repurposed as the National Library of the country, an ancient institution founded in 1887 that had an erratic life in need of a permanent physical place to establish itself. Little is known of the authors and therefore of the design process of the building.<sup>91</sup> However, this suggestive change of program and the library program in itself offers clues on geopolitical relations and intentions between Argentina and Paraguay.

Looking closer at the program and its implications within a 1950s mindset, we can see that a library was still a static program, a place to store and preserve books that also offers a space for research and study. Although being a national library makes it a building that represents the state, its official profile is demeaned due to the fact that housing a function of the state was not the original intent for the building. In fact, the building's program and its changes from school of arts and crafts to National Library are the inflection points that make the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay a poignant case study for this thesis.

Another architectural gift, the Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil, this time from the Brazilian to the Paraguayan government, offers a comparative view to help clarify the weight of the building of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay in geopolitical terms. The comparison between the library and the experimental school reinforces the main purpose of this thesis to make the material connections to the claim that modern



architecture in Paraguay is related to a major geopolitical impasse in 1870—i.e., the War of the Triple Alliance.

### **Libraries vs Schools**

The Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, as previously mentioned, represents a more static program, particularly when compared with the Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil. And not only is the program of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay static in terms of uses compared to the Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil, but a school's possibilities of continuously influencing the culture through time are exponential. Nevertheless, a school is always an asset to a community, but in this particular case, to connect it to the geopolitical conditions in the region, I will explore it as a cultural occupation in reference to the contested relationship within the region. Can a school behave like a cultural Trojan Horse, with the direct application of educational programs developed abroad continuously informing generations of Paraguayans, attuning their culture and sympathies towards the country developing the school programs?<sup>92</sup> No matter that the Argentinean gift was actually completed by the Argentineans and the Brazilians only finished a third of their project, the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay project is substantially smaller in size and aim than the Brazilian project.

Even though the project of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay sits on the same property and side-by-side with the Colegio Argentino, which is housed in a late-nineteenth-century building where one of the leading Argentinean politicians and a former president of Argentina, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, lived his last days, until 1888, the scale of the school versus again the previously mentioned Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil are contrasting in their cultural and architectural impact.<sup>93</sup> The Colegio Argentino, run by the Consulate of Argentina in Asunción, somehow

parallels the goals of the Colegio Experimental Paraguay – Brasil, to educate new generations of Paraguayans to be aware of and friendly to, in this case, Argentina, a former foe in the War of the Triple Alliance. Is the change of program once the project of the future Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay was underway an indication of a less vigorous agenda by the Argentinean diplomacy to leave an imprint on Paraguayan culture? As addressed in the introductory chapter, Argentina–Paraguay relationships were going through a cooling period while Brazil–Paraguay relationships were being revitalized by the “*marcha al este*”, or the turn to the east towards Brazil by the Paraguayan government.

Authorship is another clue of the importance, or lack of importance, of the project of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay. Finding the author or authors of the project of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay has proven to be a fruitless task. Meanwhile, if we again compare it to the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil it is possible to access, after some research, the general plans and information about the author, Affonso Eduardo Reidy, one of the leading architects of modern architecture in Brazil of the 1940s and 1950s. Again, the contrast is evident and revealing of the much-lesser-known basic details of the project of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay.<sup>94</sup> As my research has revealed, the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil is an example of a present given as a grand gesture, while the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay seems to stay in the back as a humble present, as if the card had fallen in the back of the pile.

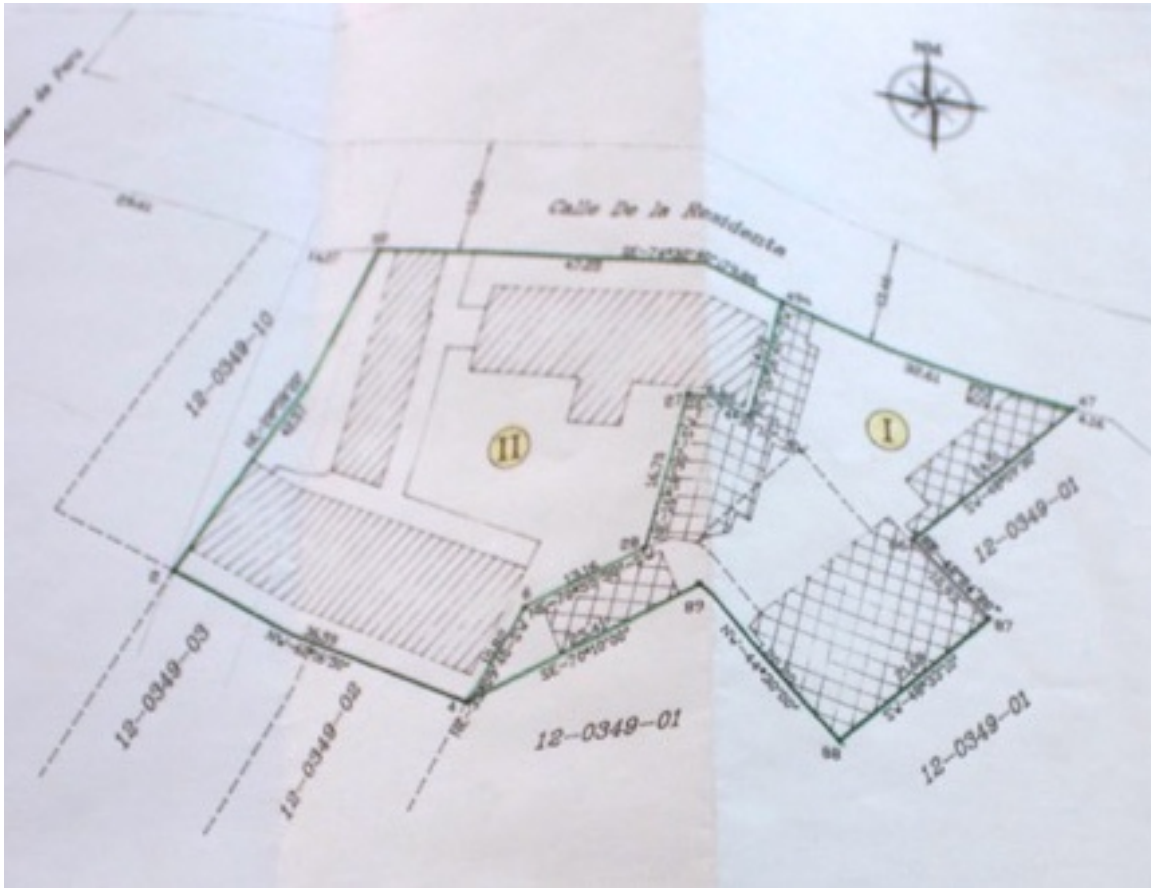


Figure 1.27: Site Plan of the Biblioteca Nacional (II) del Paraguay and the Colegio Argentino (I) in Asunción. CA 1980. Source: Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay archives. CA 1980

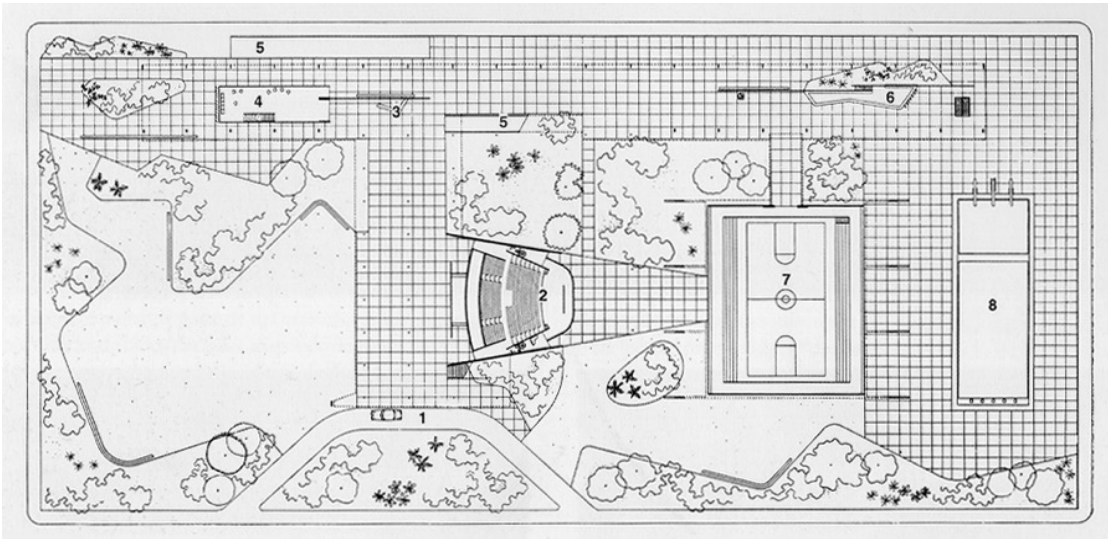


Figure 3.28: Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brazil original plan as envisioned by architect Affonso Eduardo Reidy. Affonso Eduardo Reidy and Klaus Franck, *The Works of Affonso Eduardo Reidy*, Books That Matter (New York: Praeger, 1960), 43.



Figure 3.29: Classroom wing only finalized section of the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brazil. Nabil Georges Bonduki, Affonso Eduardo Reidy: *Arquitetos Brasileiros = Brazilian Architects* (Lisboa: Editorial Blau, 2000), 158.

## **Property with history**

As we can see from the aerial images of the site where the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay is located, the city fabric opens up into a more irregular form and larger property lines. This is because the original property surrounding the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay was part of a colonial rural property that later became the site of a hotel. The site of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, as we have seen, went through successive property exchanges, including serving as the temporary home of a former president of Argentina, Domingo Sarmiento (1868-1874) and his final resting place. The latest fact links the Argentinean and Paraguayan governments in a long exchange of buyouts and donations, finally making the site a state property and the building a gift of the Argentinean government to the Paraguayan government.<sup>95</sup>Location

Presently located in a residential neighborhood surrounded by educational and government institutions that in the 1940s started migrating to the area away from downtown Asunción and into what in the early twentieth century was an area populated by weekend villages, institutionally, the Biblioteca Nacional predates that location. Founded in 1887, it left downtown and its traditional location to take advantage of the new building, with no apparent agenda regarding its location.<sup>96</sup> Again, if we resort to a comparison with the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil, a building located strategically in the future but later abandoned master plan for the Universidad Nacional de Asunción campus, occupying two full blocks of the plan, it follows that as part of its making the building that would incidentally house the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay had at least no evident plans for integrating into a bigger discourse or national plan.

Nevertheless, its closeness to other educational institutions and other public and administrative institutions such as the national electricity administration, the

Administración Nacional de Electricidad, the department of defense, or Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, the department of commerce and industry, or Ministerio de Industria y Comercio, among others does present a location within the range of the expanding city. The city had not built institutional buildings until the late 1940s and 1950s, which prior to that had been housed typically in antebellum and repurposed buildings; accordingly, the availability of scarcely populated large tracts of land made them attractive for the development of large-scale buildings.<sup>97</sup> Land availability certainly is not necessarily paired with an intentionality of producing a unique and outstanding building.

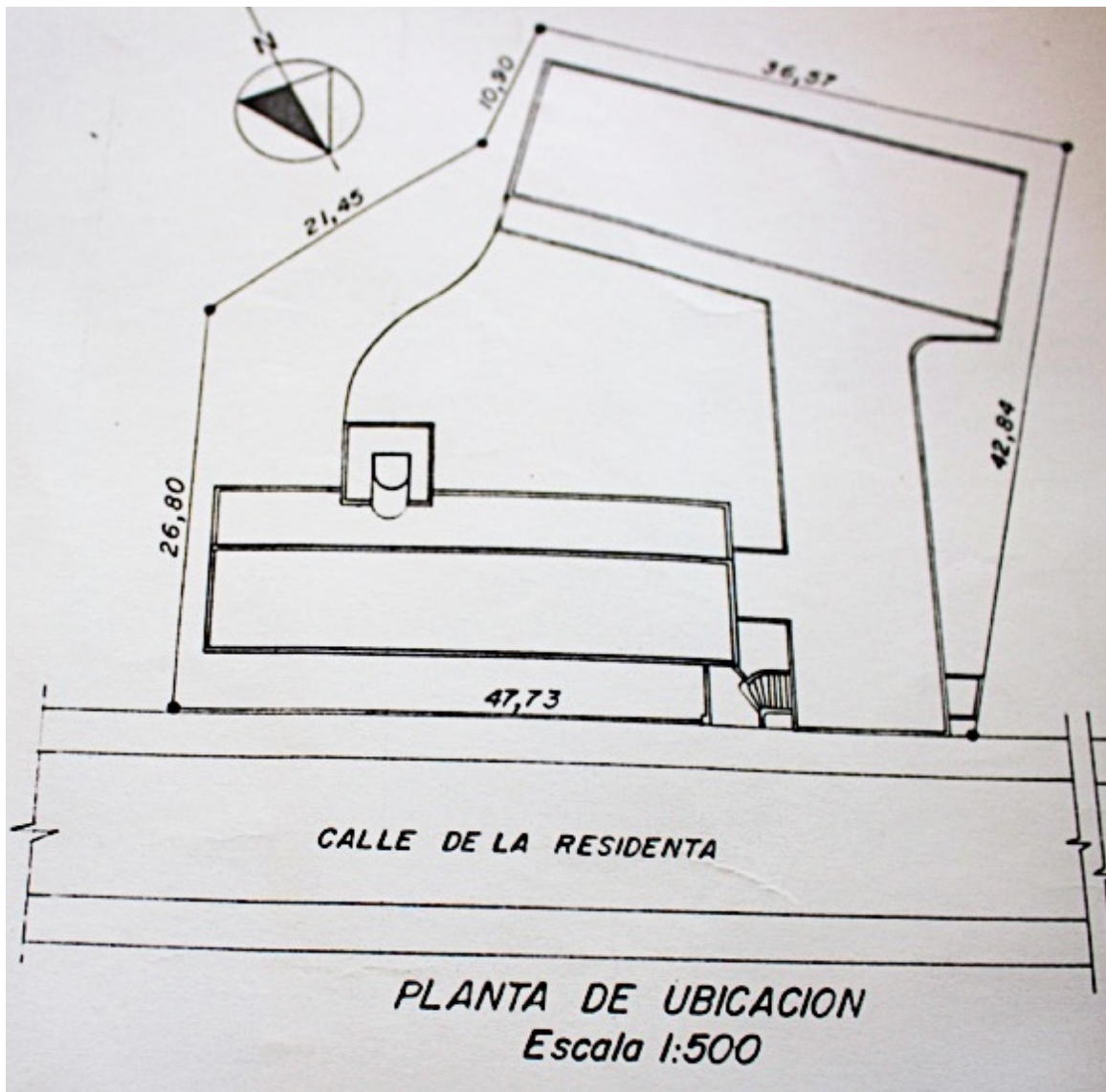


Figure 3.30: Site plan Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay drawing CA 1980. Source: Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay Archives

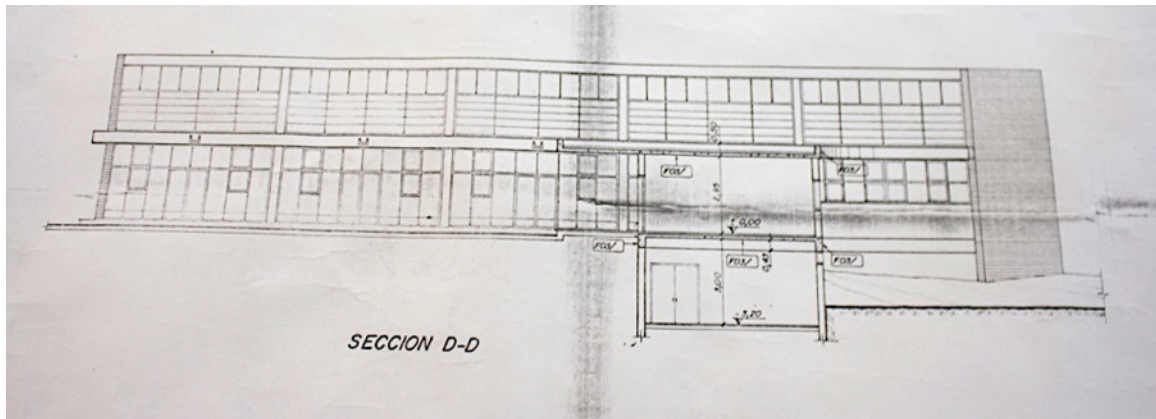


Figure 3.31: South-East to North-West Section. Drawing CA 1980 Source: Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay Archives

### The building

Occupying an area of approximately 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> within a U-shaped plan and embracing a central courtyard, the building that houses the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay is organized in three different volumes, housing the three basic functions of the library: reading room, archives, and administration. The three volumes are connected through a perimeter gallery. Utilizing the existing difference of levels between the lot and the street, the building sits a full level up and away from the street and at this level it develops the accesses as well as the congregating areas. The different parts of the programs connect through a gallery space and embrace the interior or central courtyard. The administrative volume becomes also the articulating volume by connecting the front and back volumes as well as the different levels of the building, as well as the public and service access and physically dividing the central courtyard from the secondary courtyard behind the administration.



## Access

Accessing the building through constrained staircases carved into the ground forces a change of direction, accessing perpendicularly to the lot and then forcing a tight change in direction parallel to the street, at which point the user confronts the gallery connecting all three volumes and the vast space under the library's archives volume elevated on *pilotis* connected to the central courtyard, while visualization of the main open areas under the reading room's volume and connecting to the central patio the body is forced to access perpendicularly and then turn parallel to the main lines of the composition to access the building.

After arriving at the building in its gallery space that connects all the volumes, the user encounters the internal courtyard dominating the composition. The three parts of the project are then presented to the user, who facing south can access the back volume where the reading room is or access the administrative office or go up to the archives volumes. The organization of the building through an open and shaded space reminds us of the accesses at the Asociación Nacional Republicana building and the Hotel Guaraní, which also develop main access through a shaded space. The shade again in this project organizes the building and is the only emphatic movement of the composition pulling the views towards the central courtyard and extending visually the narrow front yard.

In conclusion, the site design is very basic and follows the lot lines with a U-shaped composition and three rectangular prisms embracing a central courtyard. The archives volume toward the street is the most important and the gesture of elevating it on *pilotis* apart from presenting the basic modern tenants of free plan, continuous fenestration, and functional expression of the constructive elements. Still, with a generalized use of basic modern elements the building is one of the few modern buildings

in the area and the country; thus, its influence and notoriety comes by contrast—in other words, it comes from the scarcity of modern architecture in the country. And finally, program and building collide as the abundance of light and humidity became a hurdle for a program such as a library, making more evident the fact that the original purpose of the building was as an Arts and Crafts School.

### **Building References**

Another example of modern architecture from Argentina in Paraguay is the Banco Nación Argentina, which follows the same lines of a generalized use of modern elements *pilotis*, continuous fenestration, and structural concrete, among other common elements. Argentinean architectural historian Francisco Liernur describes how a group of Argentinean architects in the 1940s and 1950s resorted to formulas that were applied to buildings solely for “technical and functional” purposes. In this sense the influence of American modern architecture and the international style resulted in architecture that was mainly concerned about technique and efficiency.<sup>98</sup> As we have seen in the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, and in the Banco Nación Argentina to a lesser degree, this concern with functionality overpowers any other plastic intentions in the project.

The Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay shows a basic use of modern elements: the *pilotis* on which the book storage volume is elevated, the continuous fenestration, and the structural expression. Even though we have no final documentation of the architects, we can observe in the library building characteristics of modern architecture being built in the 1950s in Argentina. Historian Francisco Liernur describes how Argentinean architects in the 1950s would use, not unlike examples of the international style, the curtain wall or exposed materials as the shortest ways to find the purpose of pure technical efficiency and functionality while at the same time they were repeating formulas based on

paradigms like the Swiss Pavilion of the Health and Education Ministry in Rio de Janeiro with curtain walls with mobile metallic brise-soleils, open plans, powerful porticoes or basic pilotis, volumetric and mostly autonomous services, and big tanks and other infrastructure elements installed as sculptures on the superior plans. We find most of these elements in the building of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, where the principal volume facing the street accounts for all the above-mentioned details.<sup>99</sup>

### **From temperate to subtropical**

If on one had there are parallels in Argentina's production of modern architecture and the building of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay, in particular its compositional elements, how influential would or could Argentinean modern architecture be to the production of modern architecture in Paraguay? The use of references to which Liernur refers also contemplates other international examples, such as the work of Brazilian architects, Le Corbusier, and modern architecture produced in the United States of America during the Second World War; therefore, all of these elements mentioned above continue being part of a common language of modern architecture of the 1950s. Nevertheless, Paraguay with its mostly subtropical climate offered different conditions than mostly temperate Argentina.<sup>100</sup>

The building of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay privileges shaded and covered space as it is much needed year-round except for the short winter. The space under the pilotis in the library volume and the gallery space that connects the different volumes protect against rain and sun, and these elements work very well in Paraguay's hot and humid subtropical conditions. In 1981 the library was transformed, enclosing the open pilotis area to house the reading area and converting the former reading area into a book depository and technical processes area. These building changes reveal the change

of the building program post construction that posed different programmatic needs than the ones of a school of arts and crafts with its needs of light and openness, contrasting with a library's programmatic need for enclosure and controlled environments.

Optimal spaces for a school of arts and crafts can become hurdles for a library as high windows to maximize cross ventilation would also allow for humidity and light into the spaces detrimental to books and documents. The open space under the reading room works perfectly as a reunitive space, providing shade and ventilation but of seldom use in a library. Nevertheless, the adaptability provided by the punctual structure of the building allowed for posterior adaptations if there was any doubt on the filiation of the building. It is not likely that the designers of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay were unaware of the extremes of the subtropical weather in Asunción and its high humidity as well as high temperatures in the summer, spring, fall. The architects provided for an adaptable building as the archetypical elements associated with modern architecture, in particular a structural independence that allowed for changes without disfiguration or excessive investment.

## **Conclusion**

The Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay represents another example of the dissemination of modern architecture in the region and reinforces the fact that modern architecture in Paraguay showcased the geopolitical relationships of the former Triple Alliance members with Paraguay — in this case, in the Argentina–Paraguay dynamic. Not only because the building was a gift from the Argentinean to the Paraguay government, but because of its changes of program it also reveals the changes in geopolitical relations, from Argentina to Brazil as well as the internal strains of the political changes of the countries, in this case Argentina and its five different

governments between 1952 and 1962. More on the relationship changes following the War of the Triple Alliance can be found in Chapter I, where I explain the pendulum-like change in geopolitical relations of Paraguay after the War of the Triple Alliance and particularly from Argentina in the 1930s and 1940s and towards Brazil in the late 1940s and to the present day.

As the change in the dynamic of geopolitical relationships between Paraguay and Argentina and Paraguay and Brazil marks this period, the size of the architectural presents differs, echoing the geopolitical turns. And finally, in geopolitical terms the internal situation of Argentina while the library was being built might have influenced the low profile of the gift and therefore the lack of information available about the building. To the turn of the geopolitical relations I have to mention, as I presented in more detail in the introductory chapter, the fact that Argentina and Brazil offered a cancellation of the war reparation debt almost at the same time as they were exploring and actually starting explorations for a dam project with Paraguay offers powerful reasons for the appearance of schools and libraries as architectural presents. The Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay stands as a reminder of the importance of geopolitical relations with the former Triple Alliance foes in the development of modern architecture in Paraguay.

## HOTEL GUARANÍ



Figure 3.32: Aerial View of the Hotel Guarani and its surroundings. “Google Maps,” *Google Maps*, accessed October 17, 2016, <https://www.google.com/maps/@-25.282265,-57.6348498,772m/data=!3m1!1e3>.

Hotel Guarani, 1956-61

Architects: Rubens Gouvêa Caneiro Vianna, Adolpho Rubio Morales, Ricardo Morton

Sievers

Surface:

Lot: 4.242 M2

Competition Request: 15.000 M2

Built Surface: 23.753 M2 \_

Beginning of works: July 10<sup>th</sup> 1958

Year of completion: 1961

Inauguration: September 11 1961

Building Company: Cavalcanti Junqueira SA, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

Street Address: Oliva Esq. Independencia Nacional

Composition: 14 story + 2 underground levels

Program: Hotel with 300 to 400 people capacity, cinema, theatre, retail, and hotel amenities: boite, restaurants, pool, and conference rooms.

Project documentation: Cad based on 2013 in-situ measurments<sup>103</sup>

Client: Instituto de Prevision Social

Structure: Structural concrete

Other Materials: Concrete, brick, and glass.

Location: 25°17'03.7"S 57°38'07.0"W



Figure 3.33: Postcard depicting the Hotel Guaraní by Hans Henning, SD. Source: Portal Guaraní. “Portal Guaraní - Postales y Fotografías Del Paraguay - Postales y Fotografías de Klaus (Claus) Henning,” accessed September 30, 2015, [http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles\\_museos\\_otras\\_obras.php?id=16&id\\_obras=2733&id\\_otras=206](http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles_museos_otras_obras.php?id=16&id_obras=2733&id_otras=206).<sup>104</sup>



## **Relation to Thesis**

The Hotel Guaraní, a project by Brazilian architects Rubens Vianna, Adolpho Morales, and Ricardo Sievers, was the product of a competition organized by the governmental health and retirement system of Paraguay, the Instituto de Previsión Social.<sup>105</sup> The 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> competition request ended with a built surface of 23,753 m<sup>2</sup> and the Hotel Guaraní became an iconic building for Asunción and the dictatorial regime that governed the country from 1947 to 1989. This project is also key to understanding the third and last influence in the development of modern architecture in Paraguay: the Brazilian influence.

I will analyze the Hotel Guaraní from two perspectives: first, as an example of the Brazilian connection to modern architecture in the country and second, as evidence of modern architecture associated with the construction of the image of the Paraguayan state. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the idea of the consolidation of a new national identity now departing from the new governing party and leaving behind the political unrest of the 1940s is a primary concern of the government and is made evident in the construction of a new image laid in modern architecture. As I deepen the discussion in this chapter, I will also look for the approach of Brazilian modern architecture that arrived with this project and could have percolated and influenced future modern architecture and contemporary architecture in Paraguay.

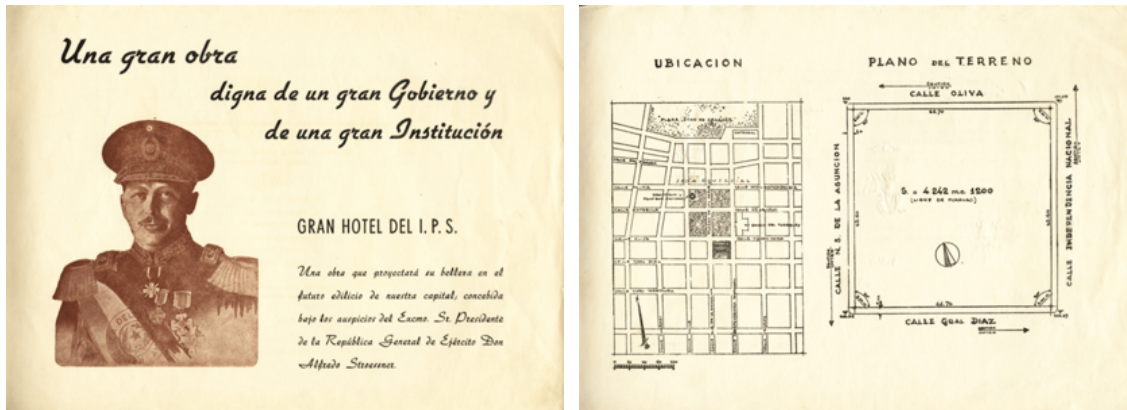
How did a hotel project bring together such an array of issues? As I will explore in this chapter, the first consideration is that the client is the state, through the Instituto de Previsión Social, and all the requests present not only the state's intentions in terms of fulfilling investment goals as the client, but also they form part of the construction of the state's image. Second, the Hotel Guaraní represents the direct implementation of

Brazilian modern architecture in Paraguay, as the project was designed by Brazilian architects and built by a Brazilian construction company, the Cavalcanti Junqueira S.A.<sup>106</sup>

Brazilian architects and a Brazilian construction company add to the fact that the head of the jury of the competition was well known Brazilian architect Affonso Eduardo Reidy. Having Reidy presiding over the competition's jury indicates that Paraguayans in this case admitted Brazil and its modern architecture as an exemplar in the region and perhaps an architectural translation of the sociopolitical *pendular* relationship that Paraguay sustained with its most powerful neighbors Argentina and Brazil throughout history.

The turn towards Brazil became more intense in the years to come, during the the time that Colorado Party rule dominated the government, perhaps as a reaction to its nemesis the Liberal party that had characterized itself with close links to Argentina, as we have seen in Chapter I. Architecturally speaking the Guarani Hotel forms part of a group of projects authored by Brazilians, among them the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brazil (1952-61) by Affonso Eduardo Reidy and the work of Brazilian architect Saturnino de Britto in single-family dwellings, among others.

Inaugurated on September 11, 1961, coincidentally the day of the anniversary of the foundation of the government party the Asociacion Nacional Republicana - Partido Colorado, the Hotel Guaraní represents another clue into how important this project was to the government and the vague limits between state and government party. The state's image by the late 1950s was clearly associated with modern architecture as its language and the Hotel Guaraní is one of its trademarks.



Figures 3.34, 3.35: Pages of the competition’s booklet depicting the president of the country and the site plan of the property.

### Building information

A product of an international competition in 1956 called by the public health services of the country, the Instituto de Previsión Social (IPS), the Hotel Guaraní was meant to be an investment of the federal health insurance and retirement agency and “add infrastructure to the city of Asunción, and become a symbol of modernity,” as the program of the competition states. The Instituto de Previsión Social was created in 1943 by Gral. Morinigo’s (1940-47) government, a government that cut the links to the previous hegemony of the liberal party and was associated with nationalist ideas.<sup>107</sup> The IPS continued to invest in real estate and tourism-related projects through the years, devoting the insured’s money as a financial move to build revenue for the state health and retirement system in the future. Other projects also identified with a modern language are the IPS headquarters (1959); the Hotel Casino Acaray in, at the time, Ciudad Presidente Stroessner, present day Ciudad del Este (1958-61); the Hotel Guaraní (1968-61); the IPS central hospital (SD); and the Hotel Casino San Bernardino (1974), among other projects. The IPS real estate investment actions privileged modern architecture language.

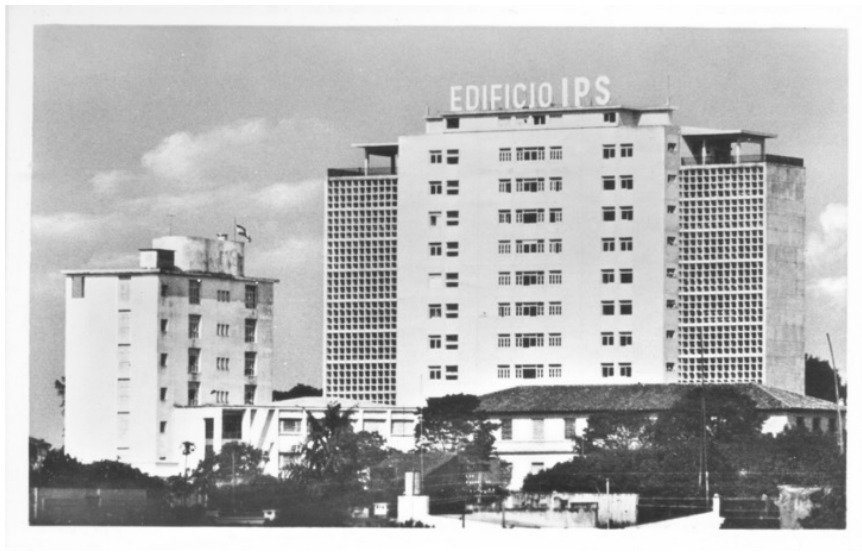


Figure 3.36: IPS headquarters, originally authored by Natalio Bareiro, Francisco Canese, and Homero Duarte all graduates at the Farq-UdelaR. The original project was substantially altered, Asunción, Klaus Henning, CA 1959. Source: Klaus Henning Postcards in Javier Rodriguez Alcala archives.



Figure 3.37: Hotel Casino Acaray Arturo Herreros first graduating class at the school of architecture at the Universidad Nacional de Asunción, 1965. “Portal Guaraní - Postales Y Fotografías Del Paraguay - Postales Y Fotografías De Klaus (Claus) Henning,” accessed December 9, 2015, [http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles\\_museos\\_otras\\_obras.php?id=16&id\\_obras=2733&id\\_otras=206](http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles_museos_otras_obras.php?id=16&id_obras=2733&id_otras=206).



Figure 3.38: Central Hospital of the Instituto de Prevision Social, Asunción, Arturo Herreros, Klaus Henning postcards, SD. “Portal Guaraní - Postales Y Fotografías Del Paraguay - Postales Y Fotografías De Klaus (Claus) Henning,” accessed December 9, 2015, [http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles\\_museos\\_otras\\_obras.php?id=16&id\\_obras=2733&id\\_otras=206](http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles_museos_otras_obras.php?id=16&id_obras=2733&id_otras=206).

### Sao Paulo Connectivity

The presence of Reidy as the head of the jury and the academic background of Vianna at the *Politécnica* in São Paulo coinciding with Vilanova Artigas can be linked to an architecture that had emphasis on the structural expression of the building, but I certainly cannot connect it to what later would be the *Paulista* school, because the *Paulista* school had a reading of structure as an expression of moral values, which in the case of the Hotel Guaraní has not been recorded.<sup>108</sup> Although the architecture of the Hotel Guaraní could not be directly connected with the *Escola Paulista* architecture, it can be linked with architecture that was being produced in São Paulo in the 1950s right when the *Paulista* ideas were brewing. Ruth Verde Zein, a Brazilian scholar who has written extensively about the *Paulista* school and its relation to Brutalism, points out the *Paulista*

school architecture had its beginnings between 1955-57, post Brasília competitions and was the product of a cultural effervescence of the times in Brazil, offering a language marked by a structural emphasis, use of exposed concrete, and certain ethical and moral questions or values.<sup>109</sup> Even though the architects of the Hotel Guaraní can be identified as being active during the period of creation or beginnings of the *Paulista* school, neither Vianna, Morales, nor Sievers have been identified in texts or through the characteristics of their work as part of the *Paulista* school. They were still part of the architectural conversation being held in Brazil at the time of the competition and construction of the Hotel Guaraní.

Even with the presence in the jury of what several Brazilian architects and historians coincide to call the link between *carioca* architecture and *Paulista* architecture in the person of Affonso Eduardo Reidy, there is no conclusive evidence that this fact had anything to do with the selected project. But we cannot avoid pointing out that in Asunción one finds the Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil (1952-63) and that it along with the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (1955), both authored by Reidy, are considered the link to the *Paulista* school.<sup>110</sup> If not a definite link to the *Paulista* school, it is a good start for questioning what kind of information or traits of modern architecture from Brazil arrived and influenced modern architecture in Paraguay — and, therefore, architecture in Paraguay for years to come.



Figure 3.40: Image depicting the signature of the cession of the land to the IPS to build the future Hotel Guarani as portrayed in the official Colorado Party another reminder of the relation of state and government party. (*Diario Patria. Diario Oficial de la Junta de Gobierno del Partido Colorado* [Asunción, Paraguay], February 14<sup>th</sup>, No 522, 1956).

## The competition

Called by the Instituto de Prevision Social, the competition for the hotel gave a detailed program and clear intentions on how it would be inserted in the city and in the economy of the city and the country. The program stated that the project of a “modern” hotel in the city of Asunción was to be of “importance” and “magnitude”. The aim was to “attract tourists” and “invigorate commerce” in the capital city. Considering that Paraguay had 1,328,452 inhabitants in 1950, of which only 459,726 were living in cities, a project planned to be 15,000 m<sup>2</sup>, that later became 23,753 M<sup>2</sup>, was certainly to impact the city and its scale. The hotel became a landmark of the city due not only to its size, but to two other important factors—namely, location and language.<sup>111</sup>





Figure 3.41: Instituto de Previsión Social building by Francisco Canese, Homero Duarte, and Arturo Herreros as depicted in the competition's booklet.

It is no coincidence that a perspectival drawing of the headquarters of the *Instituto de Prevision Social* was depicted in the informational booklet of the competition. The IPS as an institution was in this way setting the language to be associated with its image. The building was originally authored by Francisco Canese, Homero Duarte, and Arturo Herreros, the first two being architects from FARq-UdelaR and Herreros being part of the first graduating class of the first architecture school in Paraguay, the Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Nacional de Asunción. Francisco Canese designed the Ministerio de Obra Publicas (Ministry of Public Works), Homero Duarte designed the Asociación Nacional Republicana – Partido Colorado, and Arturo Herreros designed two other projects for the Instituto de Previsión Social—the Central Hospital of IPS and the Hotel Casino San Bernardino. The program's image and its connection to modern architecture being produced in Paraguay for the state portrays the built image that the institution and the country were willing to project as a nation and in this case to the architects who would take part in the design competition. The preferred language for the project was stated from the outset of the competition.



According to Paraguayan architect and historian Cesar Morra, the international competition received twenty-eight projects, of which only one belonged to Paraguayans.<sup>112</sup> The jury presided by the Architect Romero Pereira, who had been involved in the ANR project and was at the time minister of public works, had Affonso Eduardo Reidy as one of the jurors. Reidy was in fact at the time involved in his only project in the country, the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brazil, another example of Brazilian modern architecture in Paraguay, as I have discussed in previous chapters.

Architect Affonso Eduardo Reidy's presence on the jury adds another layer regarding the dissemination of ideas in the region in addressing the scale of the city as an important factor in the design, particularly if we consider that at the time Reidy was *arquiteto-chefe da Secretaria Geral de Viação, Trabalho e Obras da Prefeitura do Distrito Federal, no Rio de Janeiro*, which loosely translates to chief architect of the General Offices of Transport, Work, and Constructions of Rio de Janeiro, as well as being involved in urban-scale projects such as the *Pedregulho* housing project. In conclusion, the competition program and the making of the jury had in it a framework to which design ideas involving clear structural expression and urban considerations would have better reception. And we can also venture to say that in the future a close relationship and affinity with Brazilian architecture would continue to influence Paraguayan architecture until the present day.

## **Authors**

Rubens Gouvêa Caneiro Vianna, Adolpho Rubio Morales, and Ricardo Morton Sievers, a team of Brazilian architects who in the 1950s and 1960s were actively participating in competitions and involved with public institutions, were awarded the first place in the competition of the Hotel Guaraní. The three architects were experienced in

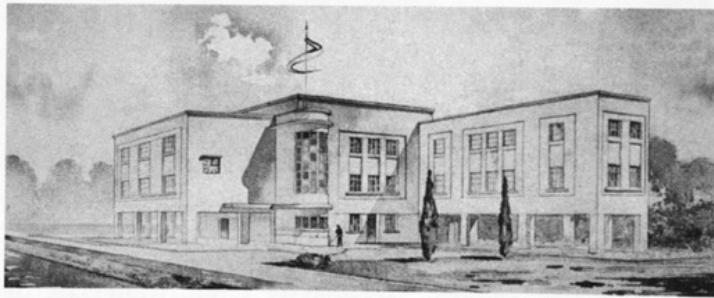
public competitions as well as working with state institutions. Vianna himself had been working in the department of sanitary engineering for the secretary of health of the state of Sao Paulo (Engenharia Sanitária da Secretaria da Saude do Estado de Sao Paulo) and associated with Ricardo Sievers produced a water treatment station for the cities of Santos and Cubatao (1954), and with Osvaldo Correa Gonçalves a school that was part of the cultural and recreation centers belonging to the social service of commerce system SESC/Senac in Marilia (1955), as well as the building for the national institutes of architects IAPB in Riberão Preto (1958). Another project of Siveres is the legislative assembly of São Paulo (Assambleia Legislativa de São Paulo). Vianna and Sievers again had obtained a first place in the Palácio Municipal de Campinas (1957), the headquarters of Ipesp (1959) industrial complex of Bebidas Cola Jesus in São Luis, obtained second place in the Centro de Esportes de São Caetano de Sul competition, headquarters of the Sindicato dos Trabalhadores das Industrias de Energia Eletrica do Estado de São Paulo (Vianna and Sievers, 1963), and the headquarters of the Instituto de Engenharia, and with a third place in the competition of the countryside headquarters of the Jockey Club de São Paulo (1962) among others.<sup>114</sup> In short, the team had extensive experience in competitions, infrastructure buildings, and overall state-related institutions in a competitive and consolidated modern architectural environment such as Brazil was in the 1950s.



Figure 3.42: Left: General View of Campina's City Hall or Palácio dos Jequitibás Campinas, SP, authors: Sievers and Vianna 1966-68.

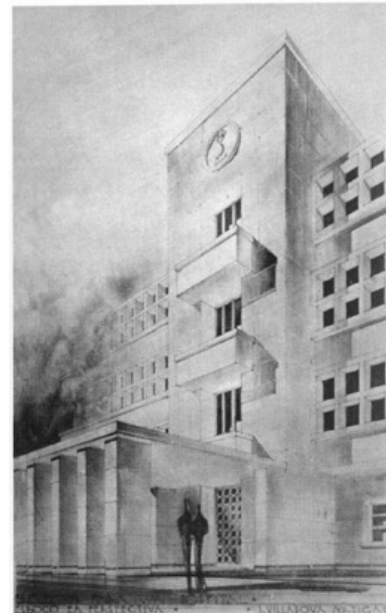


Figure 3.43: Right: Pilotis system of the Prefeitura de Campinas, SP. "Construção Do Palácio Dos Jequitibás," accessed October 24, 2016, <http://www.campinasdeantigamente.com.br/2015/01/construcao-do-palacio-dos-jequitibas.html>.



Exercício de perspectiva de Rubens Gouvêa Carneiro Vianna. *Revista Politécnica*, n. 122, entre pp. 122 e 123, abr./dez. 1936.

Figure 3.44: A shared language by students of the Politecnican de Sao Paulo. Left: Perspective exercise by Rubens Gouvêa Carneiro Vianna. *Revista Politécnica*, 1936. Sylvia Ficher, *Os Arquitetos da Poli: Ensino E Profissão Em São Paulo* (São Paulo, SP, Brasil: Edusp, 2005), 259.



Trabalho escolar de João Batista Vilanova Artigas, hospital. *Revista Politécnica*, n. 124, entre pp. 30 e 31, maio/ago. 1937.

Figure 3.45: Hospital. Student work by João Batista Vilanova Artigas, *Revista Politécnica*, 1937. Sylvia Ficher, *Os Arquitetos da Poli: Ensino E Profissão Em São Paulo* (São Paulo, SP, Brasil: Edusp, 2005), 260.

Of the three architects who participated in the project, architect Vianna had studied at the Escola Politécnica in São Paulo from 1935 to 1938, coinciding at the Escola Politécnica with Vilanova Artigas, considered the head of the *Paulista* school, from 1934 to 1937. The degree of architect-engineer obtained by the graduates at the Politécnica brought with it an in-depth understanding of structures and construction. Vilanova Artigas, in the introductory short autobiography to his monograph, comments how the architectural education he received at the Escola Politécnica was mostly a course on civil engineering that also included a course on small and large compositions, history of architecture, and a course on aesthetic and urbanism.<sup>115</sup> It is not surprising that the architecture produced by the Escola Politécnica graduates show structural design as intrinsic part of their architecture as it is evident on the legibility of structural elements in the work of Vilanova Artigas and Roberto Vianna's Hotel Guaraní.<sup>116</sup>

As I stated in the introduction of this chapter, we should not discount the presence of Reidy on the jury favoring a language of expressive structures, exposed concrete, extensive shaded areas under *pilotis*, and open spaces, as was the language implemented by Reidy and other contemporaries of the authors. All these elements are not only representative of Brazilian modern architectural language of the time, but a shared language with the international modern movement as well, applied in this case with the magnitude and uses that were characteristics of Brazilian modern architecture. With an emphasis on structural elements and their function came the adaptability of the architecture being produced in Brazil in the 1950s to Paraguay's climate as large shaded spaces and the profuse use of brise-soleils and other sun-deterrent strategies were defining aesthetics and spatiality. The climatic similarity of Paraguay and Brazil allowed for a direct implementation of this language and architectural elements.



Figure 3.46: Aerial view of the area surrounding the project highlighting the importance of the site. source: <https://www.google.com/maps/@-25.2839448,-57.6352369,247m/data=!3m1!1e3>

### **Insertion**

The Hotel Guaraní's placement on one of the edges of the four emblematic plazas in the center of the 1950s-commercial hub of Asunción, which had been a consolidated urban area since before the War of the Triple Alliance, expresses the importance of its placement in the city fabric. The plazas congregate two other important buildings—the Panteon Nacional de los Heroes (1863-1936) and the National Bank of Paraguay (1940).

For more information about the importance of the location and urban evolution of the area, see the discussion in Chapter 2 about Asunción's urban development. The highly important site location also adds to the impact that the promoters and developers of the project—namely the state, through the IPS—were envisioning for the Hotel Guaraní.

In the surrounding plaza we find the contrast and another clue to the new regime's quest for an architectural expression for the state institutions, contrasting an antebellum building such as the Panteón Nacional de los Héroes with the 1940s Banco del Paraguay of neoclassic expression. The Banco del Paraguay only ten years earlier presented a neoclassic language even though it was built by the firm Sanchez, Lago, y De la Torre, the same Argentinean architectural firm that built the Kavanagh Building (1934-36) in Buenos Aires using a simplified art deco and functionalist language. Therefore, we can infer that although Sanchez, Lago, y De la Torre was working with a contemporary aesthetic already in the 1930s, the client, in this case the Paraguayan state, was apparently shopping not only for a building but for a language to be used by the state. According to historian Jorge Rubiani in *Postales de la Asuncion de Antaño*, the central bank building, or Banco del Paraguay, came from a catalog and the president of the bank at the time picked this particular model that was inspired by Buckingham Palace.<sup>117</sup>

The difference between the decision and the process of construction of these two official buildings, the Banco del Paraguay and the Hotel Guaraní, presents another evidence of the link between architecture and state image in the Paraguayan context. We have two different governments and two different images associated with the state: on one hand, the Banco del Paraguay, a commission from a Colorado Party government that was just arriving to power and still within the political turmoil of short-lived governments; and, on the other hand, the Hotel Guaraní, commissioned in the 1950s by a

government that was establishing itself and had already devised a *developmentalist* agenda for which the Hotel would become a flagship.

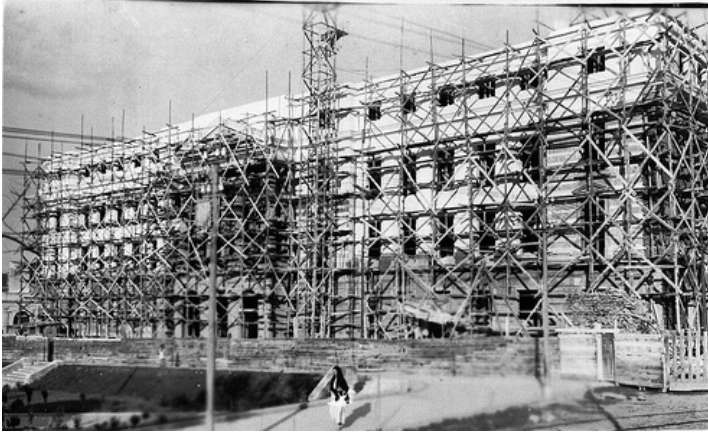


Figure 3.47: Banco del Paraguay under construction, Sanchez Lago y De la Torre, 1940.  
Source: Javier Rodriguez Alcalá Archives



Figure 3.48: Banco del Paraguay , Sanchez Lago y de la Torre, 1940. Postcard Claus Henning, SD. Source: Javier Rodriguez Alcalá Archives.



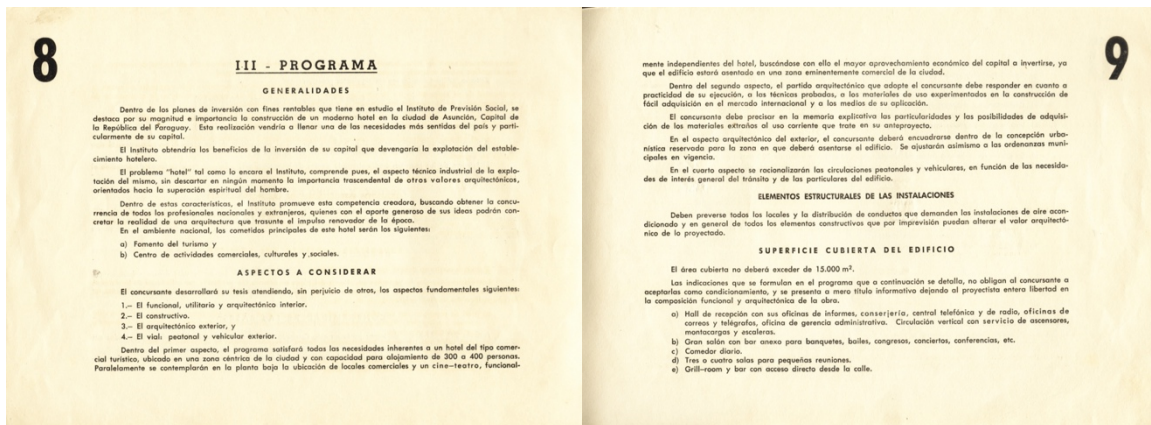


Figure 3.49: Kavanagh building Buenos Aires, Sanchez, Lago y De la Torre (1933-36)  
“Edificio\_Kavanagh\_(gevaert).jpg (JPEG Image, 393 × 630 Pixels),”  
accessed October 27, 2016,  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2e/Edificio\\_Kavanagh\\_%28gevaert%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2e/Edificio_Kavanagh_%28gevaert%29.jpg).



Figure 3.50: Hotel Guaraní under construction and surrounding area Panteon Nacional de los Heroes and Asunción's bay in the very back. In the image in construction the garden terrace with the pool and a triangular shaped void towards the access level to the compound. "Paraguay and Its Leader Pres. A. Stroessner. - Frank Scherschel – Google Arts & Culture," *Google Cultural Institute*, accessed September 19, 2016, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/u/2/asset/paraguay-and-it-s-leader-pres-a-stroessner/EgEUE4zGv1I0Xw>.

The location of the building facing the four plazas offers unobstructed views from the building towards the Bahía de Asunción and towards the Hotel Guaraní from the surrounding streets. The orientation of the façade of the building was also pre-established by the competition's program, demonstrating the intentions of monumentality and urban presence expected from the building. (Figures 3.50 and 3.51)



Figures 3.51, 3.52 Pages of the competition's booklet detailing among other things the program, the mixed-use approach of the lower levels, and the revenue producing component of the project for the Instituto de Previsión Social investment portfolio.

The building program for the competition called for a Hotel of “commercial and touristic” type with capacity for 300 to 400 people. The street level was to contemplate independent access to retail spaces, a cinema-theatre, and a hotel. A mixed-used program alerted the participants of the competition that full integration to the city was expected, which became one of the trademarks of the awarded project. The public-private relationship and integration with the street scale as the lower level opens to engage directly with the surrounding area.

## The building

The awarded project by Rubio, Sievers, and Vianna presented a proposal that contemplated full occupation of the lot in its first four levels—two above ground and two underground—forming a broad base on top of which the architects set the hotel tower. The base, conformed by the public and semipublic programs, holds the thirteen-level triangular prism with the preeminently private functions of the hotel. The layered organization following the program's functions is thus legible in its volumetric expression, as well as supported and emphasized by the structural organization. (Figures: 3.50, -51, -52, -53)



Figure 3.53: An image of the structural systems supporting the base and the tower with direct access from the street to the lower level with shared access for public and private programs. Image by the author.

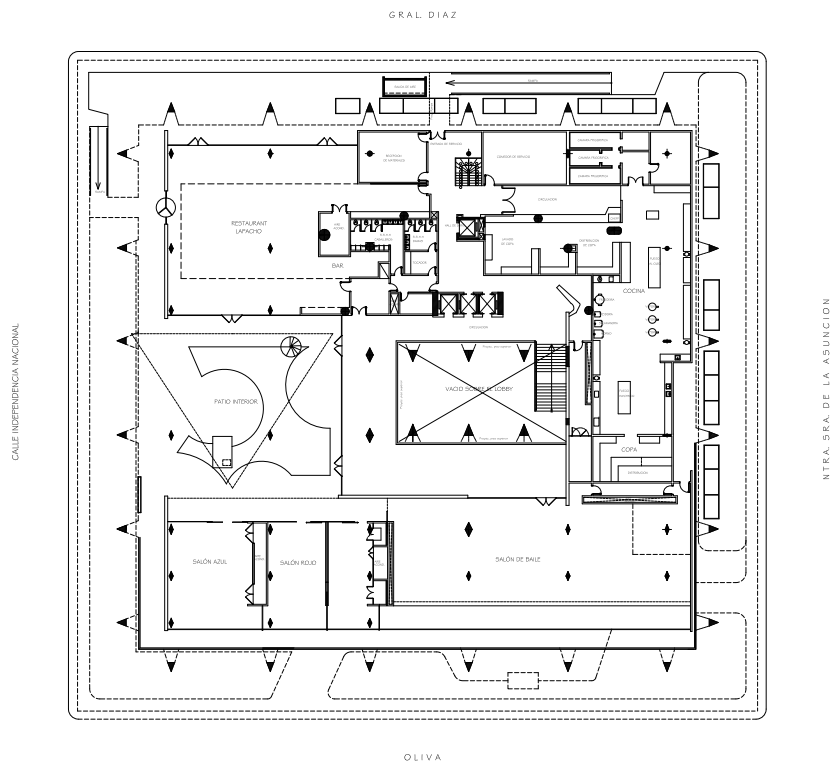


Figure 3.54: Street level floor plan (Claudia Fleitas, “Registro Documental de Obras de la Arquitectura Moderna – Estudio desde el punto de vista patrimonial.” DWG. “El Proyecto de Investigación,” ARQ-MOD-PY, September 1, 2015, <https://arquitecturamodernapy.wordpress.com/acerca-de/>).



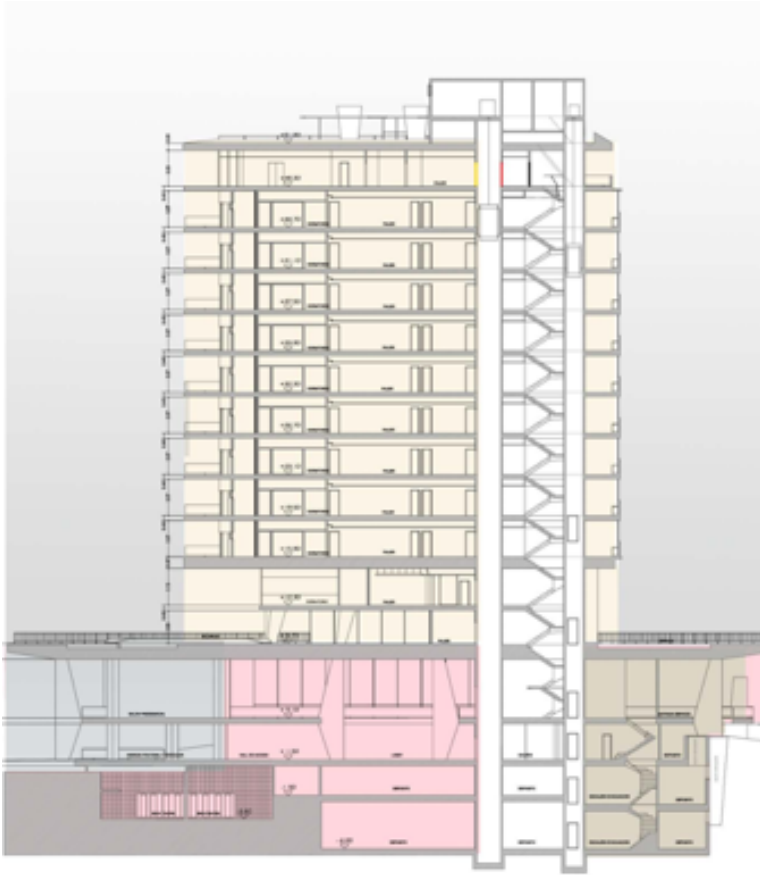


Figure 3.55: Section with differentiated programs highlighted as it increasingly encloses towards its center and tower. Based on Claudia Fleitas's cad drawings.

The ground level houses and allows access to public and private programs while the underground level houses public programs such as a cinema-theater and garage, while the hotel itself is elevated away from the public space on top of the platform, forming a terrace that visually becomes the extension of the plaza with a pool and other amenities while the accesses and restaurants are on the ground level.(Figure 3.53) The awarded project fulfilled all the requirements of the competition's program and specifically the main purpose for making the project a tourist attraction and a center of commercial, cultural, and social activities.

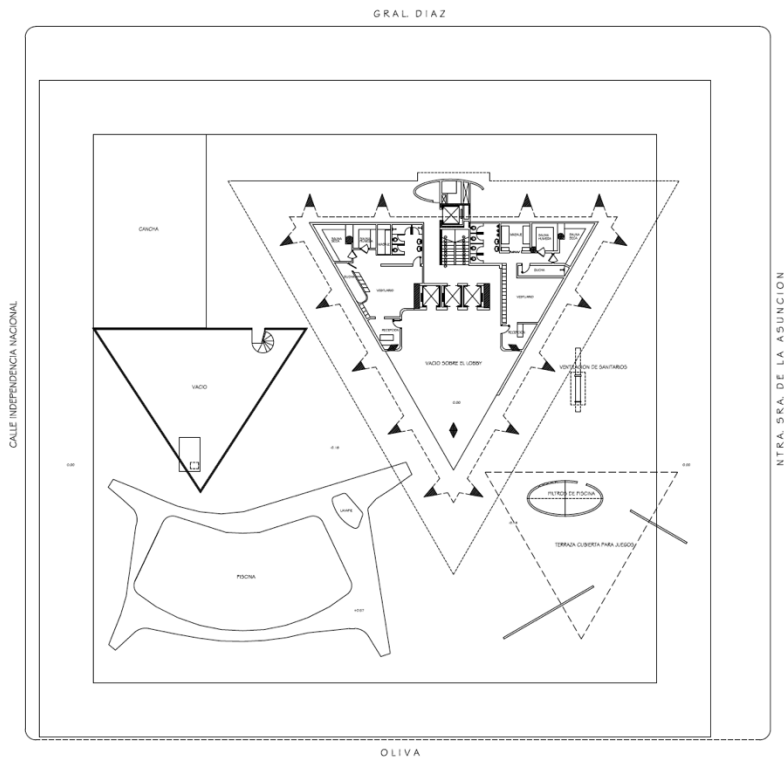


Figure 3.56: Terrace level floor plan. (Claudia Fleitas, “Registro Documental de Obras de la Arquitectura Moderna – Estudio desde el punto de vista patrimonial.” DWG. “El Proyecto de Investigación,” ARQ-MOD-PY, September 1, 2015, <https://arquitecturamodernapy.wordpress.com/acerca-de/>).

## Structure and functions

The Hotel Guaraní has a strong structural presence, in particular in the lower level with stilts that rise two levels uninterrupted, announcing the rhythm of the structural organization. The structure of the building not only supports the hotel tower, but also organizes of the functions of the building. The structural organization at the street level responds to a perimetral organization of angular base *pilotis* nine meters apart paired with a triangular base structural core. The triangle will dominate the composition through the structure and in the dominant triangular-based prism of the hotel tower. The stability of

the triangle explored in this particular example organizes the structure and determines a plastic element that counteracts the massiveness of the plinth that supports the hotel. In the case of the Hotel Guaraní the triangle is the base of the structure and the hotel tower, while the plan is organized in a square grid combining of two different vertical elements that are based on triangular forms.

### **Functions and program**

The ground level houses and allows access to public and private programs while the underground level houses public programs such as a cinema-theater and garages, while the hotel itself is elevated away from the public space on top of the platform, forming a terrace that visually becomes the extension of the plaza with a pool and other amenities, while the accesses and restaurants are on the ground level. The project fulfilled all the requirements of the competition's program and specifically the main purpose for making the project a tourist attraction and a center of commercial, cultural, and social activities.

As we have seen, the base of the project is composed by the four-story program if we count also the two basements and under *pilotis* and open plan with double heights that elevates from ground level to increase privacy. In the central space within the open plan of the first level with a square plan and defined by mostly glazed walls is the access of the hotel with the lobby and other programs that are open to the hotel and general public such as a bakery and a restaurant. Towards the southwest façade on the street General Diaz and the typical urban surroundings of ten-meter-wide streets, the architects deployed the services of the whole building, taking advantage also of the difference of level between the southwest and the northeast façade towards the plaza.



The fourth level is where the prism of the hotel stands as a unique vertical element on the garden terrace where the hotel proper starts with its outdoor programs, garden terrace, and pool. The fourth level is also the level on which the visual connection with the city on a wider scale occurs, with expansive views that open unobstructed towards the river. (Figure 3.49) And finally there is the triangular prism that houses the hotel with a central circulation spine and perimetral rooms and includes a semi-public program, a *boite*, on the thirteenth floor. The circulation becomes the connecting element of base and tower, grounding the composition. Not only did the project fulfill all the requirements of the competition's program, but it exceeded it by 8,000 m<sup>2</sup> with no recorded complains about the fact. The state was determined to provide for an iconic building of its forward-looking government without cutting any expenses along the way.

#### **When windows are irrelevant**

Tied to the presence of Brazilian architects and architecture in Paraguay is the question of climate adaptation. How well did this group of Brazilian architects understand Asunción and its climate? São Paulo and Asunción are both within the range of a subtropical climate with torrential rains and high heat indices, although São Paulo's conditions due to its elevation are less harsh than Asunción's. Passive systems, in this region of the continent, define the expression of modern architecture defining façade expression and spatial relationships. All three façades of the hotel have a *brise-soleil* treatment and the lower-level spaces recede from the street in order to take advantage of the projected shade produced by the canopy created by the plinth housing the terrace. As in the previous example of the ANR, the production of shade—of penumbra—takes generative importance in the design, leaving the modulation of the façades in the hands of the shading devices. From the shade produced by the base the building takes flight,

supported by it and connecting it to the designers' experience within the region and the cultural heritage of Paraguay itself.

Over the years the hotel, with its highs and lows mostly related to administrative problems, has succeeded as a major tourist destination, although the retail space at street level has had no major commercial success. This lack of success might be due to the fact that it was relegated to the back of the lower level and somehow pressed between the services of the building and the wall produced by the difference of level of the building towards its southeast façade. Nevertheless, the architects succeeded in making the building a reference point for the city and the country.



Figure 3.57: The Hotel Guaraní depicted in the five Guaraníes bill. Source: “Sol de ORO S.A. - BILLETE DEL PARAGUAY - VALOR.”

### **Brazilian presence**

As we have seen, the Hotel Guaraní represents two important aspects for this thesis. One is the Brazilian filiation of the building and the other is the state connection to modern architecture. Whether through the creators themselves, a group of Brazilian architects who were the winners of a competition that also involved prominent Brazilian architect Affonso Eduardo Reidy among the jurors, or through the mostly effective

architectural responses resulting from parallel bioclimatic conditions, the project of the Hotel Gurarní attests the Brazilian presence and influences in modern architecture in Paraguay. The state association with the project was straightforward, from the outset of the competition to the propaganda supported by the image of the project. In synthesis, the Hotel Guaraní represents a direct connection with Brazilian architecture, a connection that since the 1940s has increased exponentially in Paraguay's march to the east.

## Conclusion

### Flow, Monumental Memory, Collective Trauma, and Re-invention

Tîse oik owo xyrômê  
Deaha iok ... owo xyrôwê

I became a fish  
And among the fish  
Fish feel that I am a newcomer.<sup>119</sup>

The history of the development of modern architecture in Paraguay is also the history of regional relationships and these relationships are, as we have seen, of precolonial depth. The War of the Triple Alliance is in itself another expression of this regional connectivity that is inseparable from Paraguay's development due to the country's landlocked condition. Consequently, for the main question regarding the relationship between the development of modern architecture in Paraguay and the War of the Triple Alliance the answer is self-apparent, as all activities in the country would be shaken by a war of genocidal magnitude. Nonetheless, the development of modern architecture in Paraguay became a physical testimony to the country's relationship with Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay and would continue to shape architecture in the country and the region to the present.

The degrees of the architectural relationships among the four countries and their consequent expression in the built environment of modern architecture in Paraguay have varied according the direction of the sociopolitical winds, in particular Paraguay's relationships with Argentina and Brazil, as we have seen in Chapter One regarding the development of Paraguay after the war and highlighted by the difference in size of architectural gifts to Paraguay, as seen in Chapter Three. The extent of the Brazilian

influence, based overall on the size and depth of the projects, shows itself to be larger than the influence of modern architecture from Argentina, which is present but with a smaller impact than Brazil's and lacking the type of clearly identifiable provenance that can be found in the examples produced by Brazilians.

The Hotel Guaraní and the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil are two important examples of modern architecture in Paraguay that are connected to the Brazilian-known relationship between state and architecture, as well as to the evolution of modern architecture in Brazil. From Reidy's authorship of the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil and service as a juror of the Hotel Guaraní competition to the evolution of the *Escola Paulista*, the changes of modern architecture in Brazil are echoed in the examples of modern architecture in Paraguay. Will the future production of architecture in Paraguay absorb the particular traits of Brazilian modern architecture, and, if so, to what degree? A further analysis of architecture in Paraguay after the 1960s could answer this question as well as trace the evolution of architecture in Paraguay to the present day.

As I discussed in the analysis of the Asociación Nacional Republicana – Partido Colorado building, the Uruguayan influence runs deeper and is yet to be assessed, not only in connection with the production of architects who received their degree from the Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad de la República in Montevideo, but in the production of architects who received their degree from the first school of architecture in Paraguay. The undeniable truth regarding the development of modern architecture in Paraguay is that without the influence of the Triple Alliance members' modern architecture in the country, it would have never happened. The modern architecture influenced by the three former Triple alliance members became the base of development of modern architecture in Paraguay, and this modern architecture would mark the way architecture has developed over the years to the present day in Paraguay.

### Significant Findings, Connections, and Critical Aspects

The analysis of what is normally seen as a peripheral country in the region, Paraguay, opens in fact a window into the development of modern architecture within the region. Physical features such as intermediate spaces become dominant in the design of the three case studies found in this thesis. These intermediate spaces render all the other features of the buildings subservient to them a characteristic present both in Paraguayan precolonial and colonial architecture as well as in tropical and subtropical architecture. The study of the region's architecture departs from the traditional centers of power and becomes a tool to understand the future development of an architecture that uses a language that preaches intimately to a way of life.

The question is not anymore whether or not the War of the Triple Alliance had a connection to the arrival of modern architecture in Paraguay, but how and to what degree this conflict has affected the development of architecture in the country. Broadening the scope to the region, how will this connectivity inform modern architecture in the region comprising the four countries Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay? With this thesis I hope to have added a page to the development of a modern architecture outside the typical centers of power in Latin America, where there is much to be explored and learned.

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<sup>1</sup> Fernando Luiz Lara, Luis E. Carranza, and Jorge Francisco Liernur, *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology, and Utopia*, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), XV.

<sup>2</sup>Roland Joffé, *The Mission*, Adventure, Drama, History, (1987).

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<sup>3</sup> Barbara Hoidn et al., eds., *Paraguay: Abu & Font House, 2005-2006: Solano Benítez and Gabinete de Arquitectura; Surubí House, 2004-2005: Javier Corvalán and Laboratorió de Arquitectura*, O'Neil Ford Duograph, v. 5 (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Amado Luiz Cervo and Mario Rapoport, eds., *El Cono Sur: Una Historia Común*, 1. ed, Sección de Obras de Historia (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica de Argentina, 2002), 325.

<sup>5</sup> Most of their men have disappeared, but the water ways zealously keep the secrets of the ancestral culture that oddly sustains itself with the strength and impetus of the currents. Translation by Carina Rivero Rolón.

Carmen Helena Parés and Ramón González Almeida, *Huellas KA-TU-GUA*, Colección Estudios (Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, Consejo de Desarrollo Científico y humanístico, 1995), 30.

<sup>6</sup> Carmen Helena Pairés makes the case of regional relationships from the Caribe to South America of native tribes and the migration and relationships that connect them making it a bigger more inclusive pre-colonial family that includes the Karivé, Tupí, and Guaraní. This family relationship makes South America's a related ground relevant to this paper because it refers to the connective idiosyncratic characteristics of the region.

La organización política de los Karivé, coincide con la de los Tupí Guaraní, basada en una noción federativa de naciones emparentadas, que en momentos de contingencia se unían en torno a sus líderes para atacar el problema, regresando, una vez pasado e peligros, a sus ámbitos comunales.

Tanto la vida social particular, como la organización política de los ka-tu-gua, aparece signada por la noción de libertad que les caracteriza. Libertad basada en el reconocimiento profundo del respeto a la individualidad. únicamente a partir del reconocimiento del individualismo, es posible aceptar el derecho de los demás a ser autónomos y respetados, tanto individual como colectivamente en la toma de decisiones.

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Carmen Helena Parés and Ramón González Almeida, *Huellas KA-TU-GUA*, Colección Estudios (Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, Consejo de Desarrollo Científico y humanístico, 1995), 167-177.

<sup>7</sup> In Efraim Cardozo's rendering of Guaranitic Culture in Paraguay he explains the existence of other Guaraní partialities separating them in two groups according to the relationship that they established with the conquerors. Apart of the Carió, the Paranaenses, the Itatines, and the Guayraes that lived around the big rivers there were several other partialities that lived away from the big rivers and had historically less relationship with the Spaniards; these families are the Cainguaes (Guayakíes, and Mbyhás) the Chiriguano, the Guarayos, and a rest of the old Itatines. Efraím Cardozo, *Apuntes de Historia Cultural Del Paraguay*, Biblioteca de Estudios Paraguayos, v. 11 (Asunción, Paraguay: Universidad Católica "Nuestra Señorade la Asunción," 1985) 26-27.

<sup>8</sup> For more information regarding the ancestral inhabitants of Paraguay and the surrounding region consult: Branislava Susnik. *El Rol de los Indígenas en la Formación y en la vivienda del Paraguay*. (Asunción: Instituto Paraguayo de Estudios Nacionales, 1982), 24.

<sup>9</sup> Cardozo explains that the relationship with the natives was cordial and mutual accepting. Efraím Cardozo, *Apuntes de Historia Cultural Del Paraguay*, Biblioteca de Estudios Paraguayos, v. 11 (Asunción, Paraguay: Universidad Católica "Nuestra Señorade la Asunción," 1985), 27. Branislava Susnik comments on the unequal relationship of the Spaniards and the Guaraní cemented on a social system that was part of the Guaraní culture and abused by the Spaniards. Branislava Sušnik, *Una Visión Socio-Antropológica Del Paraguay*, XVI-1/2 XVII (Asunción: Museo Etnográfico "Andres Barbero," 1993), 17-26.

<sup>10</sup> Efraím Cardozo, *Paraguay de La Conquista* (Asunción: El Lector, 1989), 56. Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad



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de Asunción: CEDODAL, 2010), 89. Barbara Hoidn et al., eds., Paraguay: Abu & Font House, 2005-2006: Solano Benítez and Gabinete de Arquitectura; Surubí House, 2004-2005: Javier Corvalán and Laboratorió de Arquitectura, O'Neil Ford Duograph, v. 5 (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2013), 22.

<sup>11</sup> Efraím Cardozo, *Paraguay de La Conquista* (Asunción: El Lector, 1989), 84.

<sup>12</sup> Estimates are that 95% of the population in current-day Paraguay is mestizo.

“Paraguay,” accessed February 3, 2016,

<http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Americas/Paraguay.html#ixzz0grzL420i>.

Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción: CEDODAL, 2010), 89.

<sup>13</sup> These paragraphs are based on a previous piece titled *Super Rural* where I first approached the context of Paraguayan contemporary architecture for the book analyzing two contemporary buildings by Paraguayan architects Javier Corvalán and Solano Benítez. Barbara Hoidn et al., eds., Paraguay: Abu & Font House, 2005-2006: Solano Benítez and Gabinete de Arquitectura; Surubí House, 2004-2005: Javier Corvalán and Laboratorió de Arquitectura, O'Neil Ford Duograph, v. 5 (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2013), 23.

Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción: CEDODAL, 2010), 89.

<sup>14</sup> Regarding the controversies of the Guaraní Spaniard relationship refer to anthropologist Branislava Susnik work in particular “*Una vision socio-antropológica del Paraguay. XVI – ½ XVII*”. Thomas Whigham, *The Paraguayan War: Causes and Early Conduct* (U of Nebraska Press, 2002), 8.

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<sup>15</sup> The Jesuit missions in South America are also important in defining future spatial features in Paraguayan architecture as mentioned in the paper “*Spatial Relationship in the Jesuit Missions in Paraguay*” presented for Borromini seminar in the Fall of 2013.

Branislava Susnik, *El Rol de los Indígenas en la Formación y en la vivienda del Paraguay*. (Asunción: Instituto Paraguayo de Estudios Nacionales, 1982) 159.

<sup>16</sup> Efraím Cardozo, *Apuntes de Historia Cultural Del Paraguay*, Biblioteca de Estudios Paraguayos, v. 11 (Asunción, Paraguay: Universidad Católica “Nuestra Señora de la Asunción,” 1985), 208-209. Thomas Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, *Studies in War, Society, and the Military* (Lincoln, Neb: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 36-41.

<sup>17</sup> Guido Rodríguez Alcalá and José Eduardo Alcázar, eds., *Paraguay Y Brasil: Documentos Sobre Las Relaciones Binacionales, 1844-1864* (Asunción: Tiempo de Historia, 2007), IX-X.

<sup>18</sup> Conversely this also could be the fact that proves that the nation building process based on a homogenization of the country with the disconnection of a whole portion of the population as was the indigenous population proves the unstoppable force of a market economy that will rule the western world.

<sup>19</sup> Peter Lambert and R. Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, *The Latin America Readers* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013) 70-71.

<sup>20</sup> Peter Lambert and R. Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, *The Latin America Readers* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), 72-73.

<sup>21</sup> In regards of education we should remember that Dr. Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia apart from closing frontiers had closed all seminars and expelled clergy leaving Paraguay without formal higher education. In 1954 López addresses education in a message to the country saying “la falta de hombres especiales para los diferentes destinos y ramos de la administración es completa y prepara al país gravísimos inconvenientes.” López’s government devoted resources and efforts in advancing education. Efraím Cardozo,

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*Apuntes de Historia Cultural Del Paraguay*, Biblioteca de Estudios Paraguayos, v. 11 (Asunción, Paraguay: Universidad Católica “Nuestra Señorade la Asunción,” 1985) 244, 248.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Lambert and R. Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, The Latin America Readers (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), 72. Efraím Cardozo, *Apuntes de Historia Cultural Del Paraguay*, Biblioteca de Estudios Paraguayos, v. 11 (Asunción, Paraguay: Universidad Católica “Nuestra Señorade la Asunción,” 1985) 239-240.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Lambert and R. Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, The Latin America Readers (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), 73-74.

<sup>24</sup> J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1515-1870: A Thematic Geography of Its Development*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, v. 92 (Madrid: Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana; Vervuert, 2003), 66-67.

<sup>25</sup> In 1864 the Uruguayan government, under the control of the conservative Blanco party, faced a revolt led by General Venancio Flores of the liberal Colorado party. Having fought on the side of Argentine President Bartolome Mitre in the Argentine Civil War (which ended in 1861), General Flores gained the tacit backing of the Argentine government and the open support of the Brazilian empire. Brazilian-Uruguayan relations, in contrast, were increasingly strained by boundary incidents exacerbated by the Brazilian cattle-raising elite of Rio Grande do Sul and Uruguayan claims that rebel forces were using Brazilian territory as a base of operation. The border state of Rio Grande do Sul was an important force in Brazilian politics, in part because much of the Brazilian military establishment originated from that southern state. The Brazilian decision to use military force to extract concessions from (and eventually topple) the Uruguayan government prompted

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Uruguay to seek external support through an alliance with Paraguay.

The attempts of the Paraguayan president, Marshall Francisco Lopez, to mediate the dispute were rebuffed by the Brazilians, which led Lopez to issue the ultimatum of 30 August 1864. This document stated that any occupation of Uruguayan territory by Brazilian troops would be considered a violation of the principle of equilibrium among the states in the Rio de la Plata region, a matter of fundamental interest to Paraguay insofar as it guaranteed the security, peace, and prosperity of the area. Thus, a Brazilian invasion of Uruguay was declared a "casus belli" for Paraguay.

In October 1864, the Brazilians moved to blockade the port of Montevideo and began landing forces "to protect the life, honor, and property" of Brazilian citizens. In retaliation, the Paraguayan government seized the Brazilian merchant ship Marques de Olinda the following month as it sailed up the Rio Paraguay toward the Matto Grosso. The hostilities had begun.

This detailed chronology of the immediate facts that led to the onset of the war are just another example of the complexities of relations of the nation making process and how the struggles in defining territories had mined the regional theatre. Diego Abente, "The War of the Triple Alliance: Three Explanatory Models," *Latin American Research Review* 22, no. 2 (1987): 47–69

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem 47–69

<sup>27</sup> The Imperial Theory regards the intromission of foreign interests represented by Britain in the newly developed nations in the region to know more about the theory and the implications within the region it is worth reading Diego Abente's piece the War of the Triple Alliance: Three Explanatory Theories. Diego Abente, "The War of the Triple Alliance: Three Explanatory Models," *Latin American Research Review* 22, no. 2 (1987): 47–69.

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<sup>28</sup> For and in extension copy of the Treaty refer to: *The Paraguay Reader*, 75

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Whigham and Barbara Potthast, "Refining the Numbers: A Response to Reber and Kleinpenning," *Latin American Research Review* 37, no. 3 (2002): 143–48.

Guarani, 1948).

In Whigham's and Potthast's "Refining the numbers: a Response to Reber and Kleinpenning the authors note the population estimates from different authors as follows: Juan Carlos Herken Krauer, *El Paraguay rural entre 1869 y 1913* (Asunción: Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociológicos, 1984), 76; and Milda Rivarola, *Obreros, utopías y revoluciones: Formación de las clases trabajadoras en el Paraguay liberal( 1870-1931)* (Asunción: Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociológicos, 1993), 24 (both works note a prewar population of between 400,000 and 600,000). See also Harris Gaylord Warren, *Paraguay and the Triple Alliance: The Postwar Decade, 1869-1878* (Austin: University of Texas, 1978), 32 (which argues for between 420,000 and 450,000); Barbara Ganson de Rivas, *Las consecuencias demográficas y sociales de la guerra de la Triple Alianza* (Asunción: Litocolor, 1985), 9-11 (which argues for 500,000); Domingo M. Rivarola et al., *La población del Paraguay* (Asunción: Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociológicos, 1974), 12; and Raul Mendoza A., "Desarrollo y evolución de la población paraguaya," in *Población, urbanización, y recursos humanos en el Paraguay*, edited by D. M. Rivarola and G. Heisecke (Asunción: Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociológicos, 1970), 15-17 (the last two works calculate a prewar population ranging between 600,000 and 700,000).

<sup>30</sup> Population notes from Kleinpenning page and number search

<sup>31</sup> Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, Oxford Handbooks (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>32</sup> J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Rural Paraguay 1870-1963: A Geography of Progress, Plunder and Poverty*, *Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana*, v. 1 (Madrid [Spain] : Frankfurt am Main [Germany]: Iberoamericana ; Vervuert, 2009), 62.

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Ricardo Caballero Aquino, *La Segunda República Paraguaya, 1869-1906: política, economía y sociedad*, 3a ed (Asunción: Centro de Investigación y Documentación, 1985), 22.

<sup>33</sup> Definition of modern state:

The modern state arose between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe, and it spread to the rest of the world via conquest and colonialism. By the time the last African colonies became independent in the 1960s, the modern state ideal had become universal. This ideal comprises four defining characteristics: (1) territory, (2) sovereignty (external and internal), (3) legitimacy, and (4) bureaucracy. No state enjoys complete sovereignty or a completely effective and efficient bureaucracy, but some states are closer to this ideal than others. Legitimacy may come in various forms—from traditional, to charismatic, to rational-legal, the latter of which requires a highly effective bureaucracy and some semblance of the rule of law.

“The Modern State,” accessed February 8, 2016,

<http://college.cqpress.com/sites/drogusorvis/Home/chapter2.aspx>.

<sup>34</sup> “The War of the Triple Alliance: Three Explanatory Models,” *Latin American Research Review* 22, no. 2 (1987): 47–69.

<sup>35</sup> Oscar Pineda, *Cronología Básica de La Historia Paraguaya* (Asunción, Paraguay: Editorial Don Bosco, 2009), 75

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, 45.

<sup>38</sup> Peter Lambert and Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, *The Latin America Readers* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), 129-130.

<sup>39</sup> The process of redistribution of land in Paraguay started with transfers of vast tracts of state land by marshal Lopez in what it seems to have been and attempt to guard from the soon to come post war appropriation of territory. After the war vast tracts of land were sold to foreign private absentee owners from international markets, which marks a turn of

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the country towards total dependence on the international and overall hegemonic powers in the region. To read more about the development of the ownership of land in Paraguay refer to: Carlos Pastore, *La Lucha Por La Tierra En El Paraguay: Proceso Historico y Legislativo* (Montevideo: Editorial Antequera, 1949), 79, and, Ricardo Caballero Aquino, *La Segunda República Paraguaya, 1869-1906: política, economía y sociedad*, 3a ed (Asunción: Centro de Investigación y Documentación, 1985), 39.

<sup>40</sup> Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción : CEDODAL, 2010), 92-95.

<sup>41</sup> Peter Lambert and R. Andrew Nickson, eds., *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics, The Latin America Readers* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), 130.

<sup>42</sup> Francisco Doratioto, *Relações Brasil-Paraguai: Afastamento, Tensões E Reaproximação, 1889-1954* (Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, 2012), 26.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, 522-523

<sup>44</sup> “Crecimiento Económico en el Paraguay: La Herencia de las ‘Dos Guerras’ (1864-70), (1932-35),” accessed March 1, 2016, [https://www.academia.edu/5385852/CRECIMIENTO\\_ECON%C3%93MICO\\_EN\\_EL\\_PARAGUAY\\_LA\\_HERENCIA\\_DE\\_LAS\\_DOS\\_GUERRAS\\_1864-70\\_1932-35\\_](https://www.academia.edu/5385852/CRECIMIENTO_ECON%C3%93MICO_EN_EL_PARAGUAY_LA_HERENCIA_DE_LAS_DOS_GUERRAS_1864-70_1932-35_), 3.

<sup>45</sup> Francisco Doratioto, *Relações Brasil-Paraguai: Afastamento, Tensões E Reaproximação, 1889-1954* (Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, 2012), 526-527

<sup>47</sup> Carlos Zubizarreta and Gustavo Laterza Rivarola, eds., *Origen E Historias de Asunción*, Ed. especial de ServiLibro [y] para ABC Color, Colección Imaginación Y Memorias Del Paraguay 7 (Asunción, Paraguay: ServiLibro : ABC Color, 2007), 15. Bartomeu Melià a Jesuit historian, anthropologist, and linguist focusing on the Guaraní culture explains the Guaraní territorial organization at the arrival of the Spaniards which

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is coincident with post-colony territorial occupation and the regional relationships that we established affects the exchange of modern architecture ideas in the region.

En los siglos XVI y XVII, los españoles, a medida que avanzaban en sus viajes de exploración y en sus expediciones de conquista – y los misioneros en su ‘conquista espiritual’ – encontraron a los Guaraní formando conjuntos territoriales más o menos extensos, que llamaron ‘provincias’, reconocidas por sus nombres propios: Cario, Tobatin, Guarambaré, Itatín, Mbaracayú, gente del Guairá, del Paraná, del Uruguay, los del Tape (...) Estas provincias abarcaban un vasto territorio que iba de la costa atlântica al sur de São Vicente, en el Brasil, hasta la margen derecha del río Paraguay, y desde el sur del río Paranapanema y del Gran Pantanal, o lago de los Jarayes, hasta las Islas del Delta junto a Buenos Aires. (Bartomeu Melià, 1994).

Manuel M. Marzal, ed., *El Rostro Indio de Dios*, 1. ed, Colección Teología 9 (México, D.F: Centro de Reflexión Teológica : Universidad Iberoamericana, Centro de Integración Universitaria, 1994).

<sup>49</sup> Region’s capital cities population 1950: Asunción: 206.634

Buenos Aires: 4.618.000 Montevideo: 1.140.000 Rio de Janeiro (Brazil’s capital city until 1960): 2.413.000 Sources: United Nations, ed., *World Population Trends, Population and Development Interrelations, and Population Policies*: 1983 Monitoringreport, Population Studies / Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, no. 93 (New York: United Nations, 1985).

<sup>50</sup> Barry Bergdoll et al., *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2015), 19.

<sup>51</sup> J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Rural Paraguay 1870-1963: A Geography of Progress, Plunder and Poverty*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, v. 1 (Madrid [Spain] : Frankfurt am Main [Germany]: Iberoamericana ; Vervuert, 2009), 68.



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<sup>52</sup> J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Rural Paraguay 1870-1963: A Geography of Progress, Plunder and Poverty*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, v. 1 (Madrid [Spain] : Frankfurt am Main [Germany]: Iberoamericana ; Vervuert, 2009), 67.

<sup>53</sup> Dennis Michael Hanratty et al., eds., *Paraguay: A Country Study*, 2nd ed., 1990, Area Handbook Series 550–156 (Washington, D.C: Headquarters, Dept. of the Army : Forsale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O, 1990), 74-75.

<sup>54</sup> Argentina had eleven million inhabitants and a sixty-five percent of urban population and Brazil with twenty million inhabitants had thirty-six percent of its population living in urban areas. Idem, 75.

<sup>55</sup> J. M. G. Kleinpenning, *Rural Paraguay 1870-1963: A Geography of Progress, Plunder and Poverty*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, v. 1 (Madrid [Spain] : Frankfurt am Main [Germany]: Iberoamericana ; Vervuert, 2009), 62-63.

<sup>56</sup> In *The Political Economy of Development* the author Berg Berberouch discusses the origins of developmentalism.

What came to be known as “developmentalism,” mainstream modernization theory became the ideological arm of U.S. expansion throughout the world for the supposed purpose of diffusing “development” and “democracy” to the Third World.

The author continues explaining the three modes of developmentally according to Manning Nash of which the second applies to the examples we discuss in this thesis.

“The second mode is the acculturation view of the process of development. The West (taken here as the Atlantic community of developed nations and their overseas outliers) diffuses knowledge, skills, organization, values, technology and capital to a poor nation until over time its society, culture and personnel become variants of that which made the Atlantic community economically successful.”

In the process of ascribing their economies to a *developmentalist* agenda the countries previously involved in the War of the Triple Alliance used majorly modern architecture as the materialization of this agenda mostly in state related buildings.

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Berch Berberoglu, *The Political Economy of Development: Development Theory and the Prospects for Change in the Third World* (SUNY Press, 1992), 7-8.

<sup>58</sup> Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase, *Asunción: Análisis Histórico-Ambiental de Su Imagen Urbana: Album Grafico* ([Asunción, Paraguay: El Lector, 1987), 16.

<sup>59</sup> Gustavo Laterza Rivarola, *Historia Del Municipio de Asunción: Desde Sus Comienzos Hasta Nuestros Días*, 1. ed ([Asunción, Paraguay? s.n.], 1995), 53.

<sup>60</sup> Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción : CEDODAL, 2010), 40.

Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción : CEDODAL, 2010), 38.

<sup>61</sup> Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción : CEDODAL, 2010), 75-76.

University of Texas at Austin, *Paraguay: Abu & Font House, 2005-2006: Solano Benítez and Gabinete de Arquitectura ; Surubí House, 2004-2005: Javier Corvalán and Laboratorio de Arquitectura*, ed. Barbara Hoidn et al., O'Neil Ford Duograph, v. 5 (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2013), 25.

<sup>62</sup> Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase, *Asunción: Análisis Histórico-Ambiental de Su Imagen Urbana: Album Grafico* (Asunción, Paraguay: El Lector, 1987), 33.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 37.

Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción : CEDODAL, 2010), 103.

<sup>65</sup> Responding to the subdivision of the urban lots due to the increased value within the city the “Casa Chorizo” typology develops inward and occupies the front and one side of

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the lot opening its main spaces towards the gallery that connects the house longitudinally. Ibid, 47.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 104.

<sup>67</sup> Le Corbusier, *Precisions on the Present State of Architecture and City Planning: With an American Prologue, a Brazilian Corollary Followed by The Temperature of Paris and The Atmosphere of Moscow* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1991), 8.

<sup>68</sup> The study of trauma and recovery by Judith Lewis offers a background to this statement as the author explains that “the will to forget and the need for silence” are elements identifiable in traumatic situations. Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), VIII.

<sup>69</sup> Mabel Causarano and Beatriz Chase, *Asunción: Análisis Histórico-Ambiental de Su Imagen Urbana: Album Grafico* ([Asunción, Paraguay: El Lector, 1987), 40.

<sup>70</sup> Universidad de la República (Uruguay), ed., *Anales* (Montevideo, 1938), 141, 146, and 148.

Paul H. Lewis, *Paraguay bajo Stroessner*, Colección popular 327 (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1986), 216.

Oscar Pineda, *Cronología Básica de La Historia Paraguaya* (Asunción, Paraguay: Editorial Don Bosco, 2009), 76.

Gustavo Storm the engineer in charge was also connected directly to the government as he served as three times as mayor of Asuncion (intermittently between 1949-56) under Stroessner’s regime as well as president of the Central Bank (1956-59) overseeing the negotiation for the “first ever stabilization program of the International Monetary Fund and a U.S. loan to finance the creation of the state water and sanitation company (...)”. In other words the close connection state political party was intimate as perhaps also the agenda of government and party. R. Andrew Nickson and Charles J. Kolinski, *Historical Dictionary of Paraguay*, 2nd ed., and updated, Latin American Historical Dictionaries, no. 24 (Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1993), 545 and 640.

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Homero Duarte: “El local para la sede de la ANR constituyó un encargo directo, que nos hiciera (a José Luis Escobar y a HD) el arquitecto Tomas Romero Pereira (1951) en representación de esa institución. El había sido encargado de la redacción del programa y para llevar adelante la contratación de los arquitectos. Era un programa muy meticuloso. Aparte de eso teníamos total libertad en lo que refiere al partido arquitectónico, la imagen institucional y las soluciones funcionales específicas. No tuvimos ningún tipo de interferencia en ese sentido y empezamos a plantear la propuesta con total libertad y sin ningún tipo de preconceptos. La obra se realizó por administración y teníamos autorización para pedir presupuestos a las empresas constructoras. La mayoría eludía elegantemente el pedido...no querían arriesgarse (al no pago)...eran momentos difíciles, de mucha inestabilidad dentro del gobierno, al final la empresa que construyó la obra fue Christiani y Nielsen, la misma que había construido el edificio Marco Polo, en presidente Franco y Colón.

Extract from the interview to Homero Duarte in magazine Cota Cero No.3 1984 quoted by Architectural Historian Javier Rodriguez Alcalá in:

“Notas Para La Consideracion De La Obra De Homero Duarte En El Escenario De La Modernidad Plastica Y Arquitectónica Del Paraguay.” Lorenzo Zuccolillo. Accessed August 27, 2015. <https://lorenzozucolillo.wordpress.com/2012/02/27/notas-para-la-consideracion-de-la-obra-de-homero-duarte-en-el-escenario-de-la-modernidad-plastica-y-arquitectura-del-paraguay/>.

<sup>72</sup> Homero Duarte was not associated with the Colorado Party as his son expresses in the interview by Javier Rodriguez Alcalá. Later on the Colorado Party government it was a requisite to be registered in the Colorado Party to hold any position in state institutions or work for the state.

Ibidem.

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<sup>73</sup> R. Andrew Nickson and Charles J. Kolinski, *Historical Dictionary of Paraguay*, 2nd ed., rev., enl., and updated, *Latin American Historical Dictionaries*, no. 24 (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1993),

<sup>74</sup> “Notas Para La Consideracion De La Obra De Homero Duarte En El Escenario De La Modernidad Plastica Y Arquitectónica Del Paraguay.” Lorenzo Zuccolillo. Accessed August 27, 2015.

<sup>75</sup> R. Andrew Nickson and Charles J. Kolinski, *Historical Dictionary of Paraguay*, 2nd ed., and updated, *Latin American Historical Dictionaries*, no. 24 (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1993), 26 and 125.

<sup>76</sup> Ramón Gutierrez is an Argentinean architectural historian and author of one of the few if not only rigorous surveys of Paraguayan architecture from 1537 to 1911

<sup>77</sup> Ramón Gutiérrez, *Historia de La Arquitectura Del Paraguay 1537-1911* (Asunción: Comisión de Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia Nacional de la Municipalidad de Asunción : CEDODAL, 2010), 32.

<sup>78</sup> Coincidentally the plaza Uruguaya is named after Uruguay because the Uruguayan government returned war trophies from the War of the Triple Alliance to Paraguay and in honor of that act Paraguay named the old San Francisco plaza as the Plaza Uruguaya. Banco Nacional de Fomento (1943) by the Argentinean office Sanchez, Lagos, De la Torre. Javier Rodriguez Alcala in his article points out that this building is one of the first important projects promoted by the state post-war of the 1870's. On the neoclassic language used by the architects Rodriguez poignantly indicates the difference with other projects from the same firm that at the same time built one of the most important high-rise in Buenos Aires the Kavanagh Building. This example presents us with more evidence of the late arrival of modern architecture to Paraguay as well as presents the will from the established government to be adopted as language for state buildings.

<sup>79</sup> The intermediate or mediating space a fundamental space in Paraguayan architecture dating back to native culture and later present in colonial architecture. The mediating space between interior and exterior of the building provides shelter from the rain and heat

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and houses the main communal activities of the household this space is also present at an urban scale in towns that preserve still colonial features. The mediating space becomes a generative space in Paraguayan architecture and is present from the typical ranch or *kulata jovay* or house of confronted spaces to the continuous gallery spaces surrounding plazas that blurs the limit between private and public.

<sup>80</sup> Mariano Arana Sánchez, *La Arquitectura Y El Medio: La Lección de Vilamajó*, Colección Documentos de Arquitectura, 1 : Serie Ciudad (Montevideo: Editorial La Academia, 1977), 24

<sup>81</sup> “La década del treinta signada por la instalación a nivel local de los lenguajes de la arquitectura moderna, no registra empero grandes alteraciones en el modo de entender la arquitectura ni enseñarla. Esto si se da efectivamente en el proceso que barca la década siguiente y culminante en 1952 con la asunción del nuevo plan de estudios de la arquitectura como técnica en un sentido amplio, asociada a la visión del arquitecto como técnico active y promotor de cambios, coordinador de equipos y por tanto con una imprescindible formación generalista.”

Juan Carlos Apolo, Laura Aleman, Pablo Kebauskas. *Talleres Trazos y Señas* (Montevideo: Ediciones DEAPA, 2006), 25.

Regarding architecture education, the changes experienced in Uruguay are a reflection of the changes occurred in the XVII century prompted by technical developments and the subsequent shifts from Beaux Arts to Ecole Polytechnique approaches.

<sup>82</sup> In an interview with Homero Duarte’s son he explains how his father was in Cravotto’s studio as a student and how he picked this studio because of the urbanistic approach Cravotto imprinted in it. In fact, Duarte ended up spending most of his working life in Uruguay and only working in Paraguay between 1945 and 55.

“Notas Para La Consideracion De La Obra De Homero Duarte En El Escenario De La Modernidad Plastica Y Arquitectónica Del Paraguay.,” *Lorenzo Zuccolillo*, accessed August 27, 2015, <https://lorenzozuccolillo.wordpress.com/2012/02/27/notas-para->

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la-consideracion-de-la-obra-de-homero-duarte-en-el-escenario-de-la-modernidad-plastica-y-arquitectonica-del-paraguay/.

<sup>83</sup> References to Vilamajo's work and its relationship with its European modern architecture counterparts are mentioned in the book *Modern Architecture in Latin America* in particular in the analysis of the Vilamajo's house and the Engineering School projects in Montevideo. From the spatial relationships, circulation, and expression the book relates Vilamajo's design to Loos, Le Corbusier, and the Bauhaus. Fernando Luiz Lara, Luis E. Carranza, and Jorge Francisco Liernur, *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology, and Utopia*, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 64-68 and 86-87.

<sup>84</sup> Julio Vilamajó and Aurelio Lucchini, *Julio Vilamajó: Su Arquitectura* (Montevideo: Universidad de la República, Instituto de Historia de la Arquitectura, 1970), 197-98.

<sup>85</sup> Homero Duarte studied under Mauricio Cravotto at the FARQ-UdelaR he later became partners with Fresnedo Siri with among other projects worked in the School of Architecture. "Notas para la Consideracion de la Obra de Homero Duarte en el Escenario de la Modernidad Plastica y Arquitectónica del Paraguay.," *Lorenzo Zuccolillo*, accessed August 27, 2015, <https://lorenzozucolillo.wordpress.com/2012/02/27/notas-para-la-consideracion-de-la-obra-de-homero-duarte-en-el-escenario-de-la-modernidad-plastica-y-arquitectonica-del-paraguay/>.

<sup>86</sup> More details about intermediate spaces, the *kulata jovai* and corridor *jere*, can be found in Super Rural an introductory piece on Architecture in Paraguay. Barbara Hoidn et al., eds., *Paraguay: Abu & Font House, 2005-2006: Solano Benítez and Gabinete de Arquitectura ; Surubí House, 2004-2005: Javier Corvalán and Laboratorió de Arquitectura*, O'Neil Ford Duograph, v. 5 (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2013), 22-25 .

<sup>87</sup> The discussion about Paraguayan modern architecture versus modern architecture in Paraguay started while working in the workshop and later book *Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil* (2009) with co-authors Rossana Delpino and Javier Rodriguez in

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regards on how should we write/talk about modern architecture in Paraguay given its diverse authorship. Parallel and in a wider discussion in the book *Modern Architecture in Latin America* by Fernando Lara and Ricardo Carranza, the authors explain their approach to the title of the book. In the introduction Jorge Francisco Liernur states that Latin America is approached in the title as a “geographical support” separating it from the historical narrative away from Latin America as an adjective. As I mentioned in this thesis Fernando Lara’s direction and the book authored by Lara and Carranza has served as a guide for this thesis. For more on the distinction between Latin American architecture and architecture in Latin America refer to the book *Modern Architecture in Latin America*.

Fernando Luiz Lara, Luis E. Carranza, and Jorge Francisco Liernur, *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology, and Utopia*, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), xi.

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Monseñor Carré fue el gran maestro de la Facultad (...) estaba formado dentro de esos canones (academicos de la Escuela de Bellas Artes de Paris): pero sobre todo un gran maestro de Arquitectura y era muy abierto a cualquier tendencia. (...) En ese momento teníamos esa gran inquietud que trajo la arquitectura moderna. Estábamos todo el tiempo “prendidos” de Larchitecture d’Aujourd’hui, de Modern Bauformen y todo ese tipo de revistas que tuvieron gran influencia en mi y mis compañeros.

In an interview with architect Ernesto Leborgne who studied architecture at the FARQ-UdelaR between 1925-1931 he explains the openness of the architecture to new languages and how the students were connected to the modern architecture By way of Europe and magazines as well as the openness of the head of the school at the time.



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More details on the studio conditions emerge from the interview of Homero Duarte's son who explains how the students had . "Notas Para La Consideracion De La Obra De Homero Duarte En El Escenario De La Modernidad Plastica Y Arquitectónica Del Paraguay.," *Lorenzo Zuccolillo*, accessed August 27, 2015, <https://lorenzozucolillo.wordpress.com/2012/02/27/notas-para-la-consideracion-de-la-obra-de-homero-duarte-en-el-escenario-de-la-modernidad-plastica-y-arquitectonica-del-paraguay/>.

<sup>90</sup> I went to see her. She had progressed, she was teaching in college and she was collaborating with a group of young architects who were building, in Tucuman, something that later she showed me; it was a factory or a school. I don't know, everything looks the same, everybody knows it: tomorrow one can install in any of these buildings, either a drill or a maternity ward. This is what they call functionalism." The original book was first published in 1961 three years before the construction of the building of the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay.

Translation Carina Rivero.

Ernesto Sábato, *Sobre Heroes y Tumbas* (Buenos Aires, Planeta S.A.I.C.:2011), 347.

<sup>91</sup> Pedro Gamarra Doldán, "En El 125 Aniversario de La Biblioteca Nacional," *Edicion Impresa - ABC Color* (Asunción, Paraguay), Feb. 17, 2013.

<sup>92</sup> Irina Rivero and Rossana Delpino, eds., *Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil: Obra de Affonso Eduardo Reidy* ([Paraguay: s.n.], 2009), 77-79.

Among the documentation found while conducting a research about the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil we have found evidence of the official matter of the project for example an official treaty between Brazil and Paraguay regarding the school as well as letters indicating that the school program was made in Brazil by Manoel Bergstrom Lourenço Filho a prominent Brazilian educator that held governmental offices poignantly under Gustavo Capanema's Ministry of Health and Education among other leading state pedagogical institutions.

<sup>93</sup> [www.intermedia.com.py](http://www.intermedia.com.py), "» Colegio Argentino » Embajada Argentina En Paraguay."

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<sup>94</sup> As part of the group Experiencia Fronteriza and when in charge of researching information about the Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil for a workshop and later a publication: “Colegio Experimental Paraguay Brasil: Obra de Affonso Eduardo Reidy” I experienced first-hand the task of researching information about the Colegio Experimental. Even though at first the information was not available there were leads and unofficial information about the author of the project that later and was confirmed through research; as opposed to the experience researching the Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay which had no leads and or bibliography regarding its possible authorship.

<sup>95</sup> Maureen Thompson, *Puesta en Valor de la Biblioteca Nacional del Paraguay*, (Degree Final Work, Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Nacional de Asunción, Asuncion, 2006), 17-18.

<sup>96</sup> A. B. C. Color, “En El 125 Aniversario de La Biblioteca Nacional - Edicion Impresa - ABC Color,” accessed September 28, 2016, <http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-impresa/suplementos/cultural/en-el-125-aniversario-de-la-biblioteca-nacional-539502.html>.

<sup>97</sup> La infraestructura edilicia del estado entre 1870 y 1940 databa en gran medida de la pre-guerra de 1865 (La Aduana –reiteradamente intervenida en el XIX y el XX- ; el Palacio de Gobierno; el Teatro-inconcluso; el Cabildo, etc. Otros locales de oficinas estatales o eran alquilados o habían sido construidos por particulares para otros fines

Javier Rodriguez makes the argument that in fact institutional buildings between 1870 and 1940 were housed in antebellum or repurposed buildings in the paper “Resonancias”. Javier Rodriguez, Rossana Delpino and Irina Rivero. *Resonancias* (Paper, LASA, New York City, 2016), 19.

<sup>98</sup> Jorge Francisco Liernur, *La Arquitectura En La Argentina Del Siglo XX: La Construcción de La Modernidad* (Buenos Aires: Fondo Nacional de las Artes, 2001), 232.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. 238.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. 232.

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<sup>103</sup> Claudia Fleitas. Student work.Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Nacional de Asuncion Departamento de Investigacion.

<sup>104</sup> “Portal Guaraní - Postales Y Fotografías Del Paraguay - Postales Y Fotografías De Klaus (Claus) Henning,” accessed September 30, 2015, [http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles\\_museos\\_otras\\_obras.php?id=16&id\\_obras=2733&id\\_otras=206](http://www.portalguarani.com/detalles_museos_otras_obras.php?id=16&id_obras=2733&id_otras=206).

<sup>105</sup> The Instituto de Prevision Social owns this and other real estate investments through the country.

<sup>106</sup> From Dr Emilio Cubas of the Hotel Guaraní inaugural address, SD Hotel Guaraní, El Pais, SD. Centro de Investigación Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Nacional de Asunción.

<sup>107</sup> Francisco Doratioto, *Relações Brasil-Paraguai: Afastamento, Tensões E Reaproximação, 1889-1954* (Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, 2012)256-257.

<sup>108</sup> Elisabetta Andreoli and Adrian Forty, eds., *Brazil's Modern Architecture* (London ; New York: Phaidon, 2004), 50-51.

<sup>109</sup> Ruth Verde Zein, “A arquitetura da escola paulista brutalista 1953-1973,” 2005, <http://www.lume.ufrgs.br/handle/10183/5452>.

<sup>110</sup> Fernando Luiz Lara, Luis E. Carranza, and Jorge Francisco Liernur, *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology, and Utopia*, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014).

<sup>111</sup> “DGEEC::Dirección General de Estadística, Encuestas Y Censos,” accessed September 18, 2015, [http://www.dgeec.gov.py/sub\\_index/Pobreza/index.php](http://www.dgeec.gov.py/sub_index/Pobreza/index.php).

<sup>112</sup> Cesar Morra, “Drops 033.05: Hotel Guaraní: La Marca Del Lugar (1) | Vitruvius,” accessed December 12, 2015, <http://vitruvius.com.br/revistas/read/drops/10.033/3464>.

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<sup>114</sup> Sylvia Ficher, *Os Arquitetos Da Poli: Ensino E Profissão Em São Paulo* (São Paulo, SP, Brasil: Edusp, 2005).

<sup>115</sup> João Batista Vilanova Artigas and Alvaro Puntoni, *Vilanova Artigas: arquitetos brasileiros = brazilian architects*, *Arquitetos brasileiros = Brazilian architects* (Lisboa, Portugal ; São Paulo, SP, Brasil: Instituto Lina Bo e P.M. Bardi ; Fundação Vilanova Artigas, 1997), 17.

<sup>116</sup> João Batista Vilanova Artigas, *A Função Social Do Arquiteto*, Coleção “Cidade Aberta” (São Paulo, SP: Nobel, 1989), 17.

<sup>117</sup> Jorge Rubiani, *Postales de La Asunción de Antaño*, 3. ed., v.1 ; 2. ed., v.2 (Asunción, Paraguay: Intercontinental Editora, 2002), 431.

<sup>119</sup> The Spell of the Woman-Fish/Hcykera Tymichare Doxio: There are also women shamans they say that fish in a dream kidnapped Tymîcharra. This happened long ago. It happened that fish took her underwater to see if she could stand it. If she did not sing like them, she would die. But one fish taught her. She listened carefully until she managed to tune into the song of the fish.

She said that she did not eat fish because they were her friends and she became so much part of them that she was no longer aware whether she was herself or a singing fish.

Ogwa et al., *Chamacoco cosmografía =: Cosmography Chamacoco* (Borås, Sweden: Borås Konstmuseum, 2005), 104.

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